



Europe's migrant crisis

Once in Italy, more than half the survivors disappear

01.05.2015

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Newsweek

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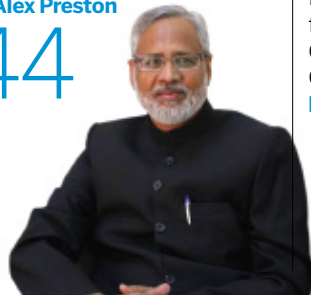


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Editor's letter

The job of reporting



Richard Addis
editor@newsweek.com

Congratulations to the winners of the European Press Prize in Copenhagen last week. Among them were two pieces of superb reporting by Elena Kostyuchenko of *Novaya Gazeta* on Russians fighting in Ukraine and Ander Izagirre of *El País* on abuses by the Colombian army. Original reporting remains the gold standard of journalism. For the past 30 years it has been undermined, especially in Europe, by the financial woes of the news industry. Today *Newsweek* is at

the forefront of the movement to revive it and this week our reporters tell stories that explore two urgent global issues: climate change and religious extremism. The amount of water in the world has remained fixed since the Earth formed, but its distribution around the globe makes the difference between life and death. Which is why California is in crisis. Our reporter Elijah Wolfson describes the worst drought in more than 1,000 years in an

economy larger than Russia, India, Spain or Australia.

On the other side of the world, Alex Preston investigates a murder in Pakistan. In the shadow of the great Indus Valley civilisation, at some of the finest universities in South Asia, leading academics are being murdered at a horrifying rate. Alex's report on the shooting of the dean of Islamic studies at Karachi University, Dr Shakeel Auj, is a classic example of patient reporting.

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Europe, Middle East & Africa
Published by
Newsweek Ltd,
a division of
IBT Media Group Ltd

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Big shots

Chile

Running riot

Street dogs in Santiago make the most of student riots to gambol in the powerful arc from a water cannon. The protests, involving more than 100,000 students, broke out after money raised by the government to abolish high tuition fees was instead allocated elsewhere amid allegations of corruption. Initially peaceful, the demonstrations tipped over into violence when some marchers began to pelt armed police with rocks and street signs.

Photograph: Vladimir Rodas/Getty









Gaza

Air and graces

The sun sets as these young Palestinian exponents of parkour fling themselves into the air as part of their daily training. They live and work in the Al-Namssawi neighbourhood in southern Gaza Strip, but parkour – a holistic training discipline that originated from France – is the main focus of their lives. Parkour is all about using movement of the human body and involves vaulting, jumping, running, rolling and whatever is deemed appropriate for any given situation

Photograph: Mohammed Saber/EPA

Big
shots

USA

Tiny dancer

Himika Tamamoto is only seven, but already old enough to audition for the School of American Ballet in New York's Chinatown. With a little help from a grown-up, she stretches her right leg while balancing on the other, her flexibility about to be recorded. The school, established in 1934, is one of the country's premier ballet academies.

Photograph: Timothy A. Clary/Getty

Big
shots





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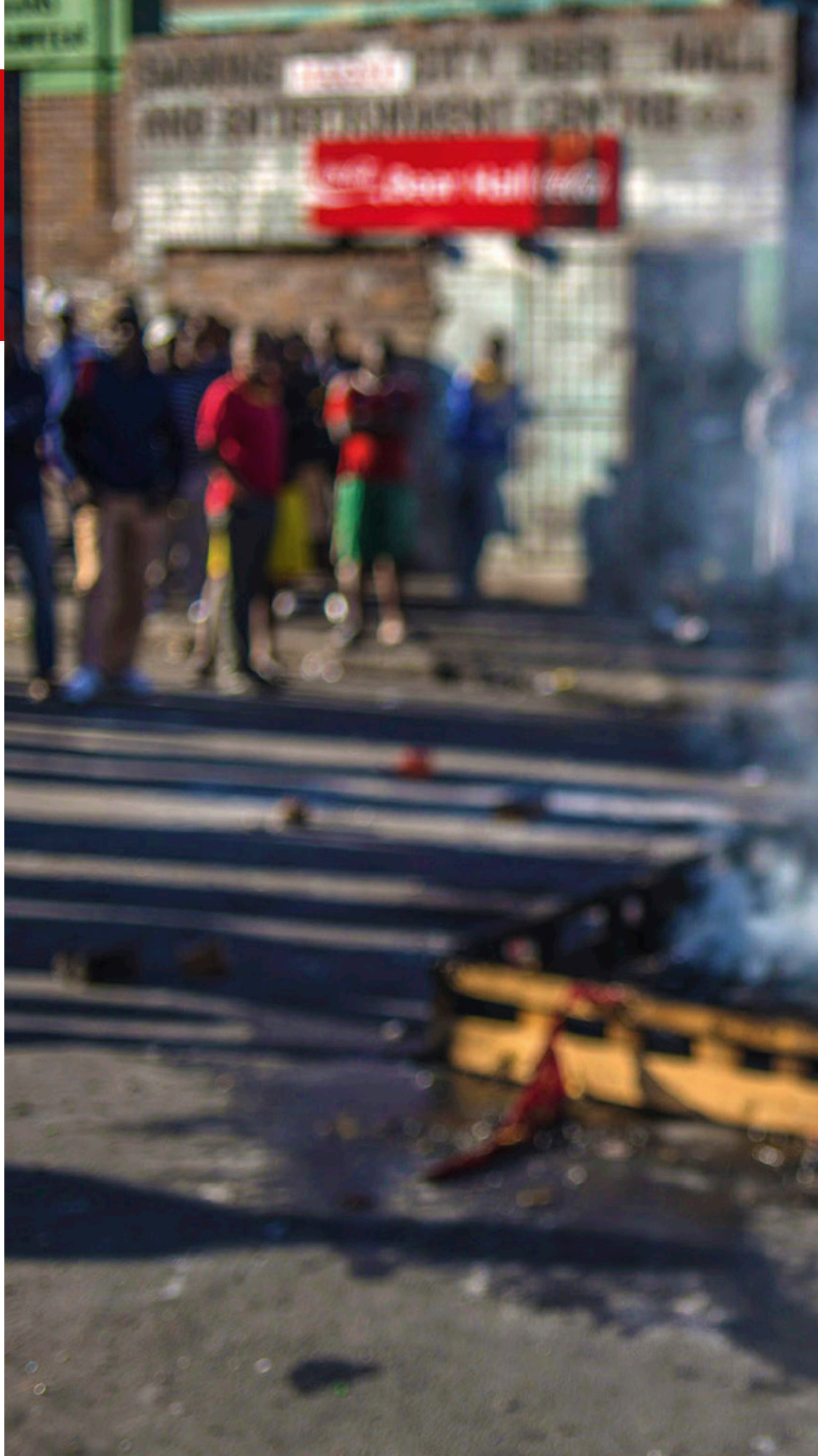
Big shots

South Africa

Face of hate

A woman covered in soot gestures towards foreigners outside a hostel in the Jeppestown area of Johannesburg, as xenophobic violence breaks out in cities across the country. A speech last month by the Zulu king, Goodwill Zwelithini, during which he described immigrants as “lice”, has been blamed for vicious attacks on foreign nationals, who make up 10% of South Africa’s population. President Jacob Zuma has pledged to set up dedicated courts to try those arrested.

Photograph: Mujahid Safodien/Getty





Immigration

Italy is allowing migrants who survive the voyage to 'disappear' into Europe

Nicholas Farrell Rimini

The number of migrants who perished in the early hours of last Sunday near the Italian island of Lampedusa in the Sicilian Channel may never be known. But then, precise figures on any aspect of the escalating European Union migration crisis have long proved impossible.

It is thought that the Italian Navy saved some 170,000 boat people in 2014 and brought them to Italy. It is also thought Italy's centre-Left government then lost all trace of 100,000 of them once inside Italy.

There have been persistent reports in Italy of police dumping coachloads of migrants at railway stations such as Milan and Rome in the hope that they will leave Italy.

No one should be surprised. Even if it were his intention, Prime Minister Matteo Renzi could never find space for all 170,000 - three times as many as the previous record in 2011 - let alone the 500,000 from Libya alone expected to arrive this year. This figure is based on numbers of boat people so far this year, three times as high as in the same period in 2014.

There are a mere 66,000 beds in Italy's so-called "reception centres" (Centri di Accoglienza e Deportazione) scattered around the country, plus a further 13,000 places in

temporary centres set up in disused government buildings and, increasingly, in hotels.

The only way for migrants to remain in Italy legally is to apply for political asylum, which means providing proof of name and country of origin.

It takes at least six months to process these applications.

Everyone who isn't granted asylum is deported - in theory. But that is not what happens. Few of those handed deportation papers leave. They just disappear. And when those

without papers refuse to tell the authorities their name and country of origin, Italy has no idea where to send them. Last year, approximately 40,000 deportation papers were issued but only some 5,000 migrants actually left Italy.

Migrants are allowed to stay in the reception centres for up to a year while their status is decided. Although surrounded by high security fences, these are not prisons and migrants are allowed out at certain times of day. They can also take courses in making ice cream and pizza - and in some cases learn to drive. It is easy to abscond for good whenever they choose and, in any event, they are allowed to leave once they have lodged an asylum request and been equipped with a document that gives them temporary permission to remain in Italy - though they are not allowed to work.

Fabrizio Gatti, a *L'Espresso* journalist who is an expert on the migrant issue, says: "Literally dozens of these foreigners are lost at all hours of the day and night. Rescued at sea and counted, once ashore they've just been left free to abscond." According to Andrea Maestri, a Ravenna-based asylum lawyer, the authorities actively collaborate in such absconding. "The police did this quite openly last year and no doubt they will do it again



Mercy mission: African asylum seekers are tracked by the Italian navy operation Mare Nostrum last year. Now the EU has taken over



Welcome to Italy: a woman holds her baby as she waits to board a ferry along with other migrants from the island of Lampedusa to Sicily

this year, too, in the summer when the wheel really flies off,” says Maestri. “All you had to do was go to Milan station and watch the coaches pull up.”

Many migrants do not want to apply for asylum in Italy, because the country’s welfare system is virtually non-existent for people who have never had a job. Instead, they hope to move on to countries such as Britain and Germany where both work and welfare are easier to find.

It’s easy to travel from Italy to France by train without passport or ticket checks. Many migrants camped out at Calais have confirmed they reached France via Libya and Italy.

In the light of growing Italian anger at having to shoulder the lion’s share of the burden of Europe’s migrant crisis, the country’s costly Mare Nostrum programme was replaced at the end of last year by Triton, an EU initiative, organised by its Border Agency, Frontex.

Italy launched Mare Nostrum after 366 migrants died in October 2013, when a single boat sank near the coast of Lampedusa. Its brief was to search for and rescue boat people right up to the Libyan coast and bring them to Italy.

This simply caused the numbers of migrants to escalate, according to critics, which included the EU Commission in Brussels and the British government.

Triton, on the other hand, is

a European Union initiative whose brief is to police EU territorial waters across the Mediterranean.

The effect the change will have on migrant numbers and the number of deaths at sea remains to be seen. EU foreign ministers agree that the only long-term solution to the migrant crisis is to stop ships leaving from the coast of Africa in the first place.

But they also agree that, at present, this is unachievable.

Russia

Putin rewrites history in bid to reassert control over Russia's oldest city

Anna Nemtsova Derbent

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"Who is stealing the money?" Sergei Melikov shouted at the mayor of Derbent, Russia's oldest city. "There is no place to kneel down here, no place to touch with a Ribbon of Saint George, how could you bring the city to this condition?" The mayor stared at the table, quailing in the face of the Kremlin's rage.

The furious row last week between President Putin's envoy to the North Caucasus Federal District, Sergei Melikov, and Derbent's mayor, Imam Yaraliyev, and his administration is the culmination of a huge vanity project, behind which surges the dark undercurrents of Vladimir Putin's Russia.

In Putin's ideal world, Derbent, in the republic of Dagestan, would shine as a

tourist gem of the North Caucasus; a historical, peaceful centre uniting Islam and Christianity.

In the real world, Derbent's history is turbulent, with a growing Islamist threat and an administration known for staggering corruption and oppression of critics.

Nevertheless, Putin ordered more than €30m of spending on a massive renovation project for Derbent to make his vision a reality. His plan was drawn up two years ago. September 2015 was to be a celebration of the 2,000-year anniversary of the city - an idea that baffled locals, who had already celebrated the city's 2,700th anniversary some 40 years earlier.

More surprising declarations soon followed: a house Peter the Great had stayed in was "discovered", it was revealed that symbols of Christianity had been "invented" in the Persian

Naryn Kala citadel overlooking the city. The old town was to get a makeover too, the ancient fortress refaced with fresh yellow stone.

The money served another purpose - to soothe forces hostile to the Kremlin, in a region that Putin worries could be slipping beyond his control. With rebellious leaders causing trouble and an increasingly active Islamist element, Derbent is an example of how the Kremlin's attempts to keep far-flung regions in check have sometimes failed.

The development money was stolen; the city mayor is being investigated for corruption; his critics have been abducted and beaten; the local Muslim community is revolting under pressure from the authorities; and dozens of young people, both boys and girls, have left for Syria to join Isis.

Why was the mess such a

surprise to the Kremlin? Perhaps because the voices that had spoken out had been violently silenced.

Last month, civil activist Ruslan Magomedragimov, who organised street protests and spoke out against police corruption in Derbent, was found dead. Earlier this month, three men in masks abducted Stanislav Starodubets, a Moscow blogger, drove him to the mountains, beat him nearly unconscious and warned him to go back to Moscow, otherwise he would be dead.

"Important materials disappear from my case file, the police investigator is useless - he is doing everything the mayor's people and his organised criminal group tell him," Starodubets says. Nonetheless, the blogger has decided to stay in Derbent and seek justice.

Corruption isn't the only problem facing the North Caucasus - the region is spinning beyond Moscow's control. Hundreds of Russian citizens are killed every year as a result of armed conflict and organised crime. Authorities have blamed the unrest on Islamists and security services have cracked down on the Muslim community. Add Isis propaganda - increasingly broadcast in Russian over the internet - and the result is that hundreds of young people from Dagestan and neighbouring Chechnya are travelling to fight in Syria.

More than 80 have left from Derbent - a city of 120,000 - alone. Sevil Navruzova, director of the Centre for Countering Extremism in Dagestan, is charged with trying to persuade these young jihadis to return home, "but only a tiny percentage of those



Dirty old town: as Derbent rots, dozens of young people, boys and girls, have left for Syria to join Isis

RIA NOVOSTI/ALAMY, MIKHAIL MORDASOV



Kickback city: Putin ordered more than €30m of spending on a massive renovation project for Derbent

who don't fight agree to come back to Russia", she says.

What's more, the worries over returning jihadis are the same here as in Western Europe. "There is a concern that former Isis members can spike terrorism in the North Caucasus, once they return from Syria, Iraq or Afghanistan," Navruzova says.

In Chechnya, which has a long history of Islamist violence, the Kremlin-installed leader, Ramzan Kadyrov, seems to have outgrown his dependence on Moscow. The recent investigation into the murder of opposition leader Boris Nemtsov has stalled because a key witness, Ruslan Geremeyev, is hiding in Chechnya. Kadyrov was also unhappy when Moscow arrested five Chechen suspects, including two from his elite North Battalion guards. "It's obvious that Russian federal law enforcement cannot act at all in Chechnya. They've lost their monopoly on violence," said State Duma deputy and friend

of Nemtsov Dmitry Gudkov last week.

Caucasian Knot editor-in-chief Gregory Shvedov agrees: "Putin controls Kadyrov single-handedly but it is unclear for how long Putin would be capable of controlling the institutions behind the most influential leader in North Caucasus and tens of thousands of Kadyrov's well-trained military forces," he says.

This is why big state spending projects, such as the celebrations in Derbent, have taken on a new importance to the Kremlin as it seeks to reassert its authority over the troubled region.

The Derbent project follows a pattern of big-budget projects that allow the Kremlin to project its power across the nation, stoking patriotic pride and providing high-value contracts for local companies. In the past few years, the Kremlin has spent €2bn on 2013 Summer Universiade in Kazan, more than €18bn on the construction of a modern

university and two bridges in Vladivostok by APEC Russia 2012, and €48bn on Sochi 2014 Winter Olympics. In each case, original budgets announced by authorities ballooned by the time the projects were finished. Surveys by opposition leaders, including Nemtsov, revealed state corruption on an industrial scale.

Meanwhile, plans for Derbent's anniversary celebrations push ahead, varnishing Putin's re-engineered history of the troubled city, according to

which Christianity and Islam have always lived in harmony. And while these big-budget state funded projects are often designed to fill the pockets of local officials, Derbent's mayor may have underestimated the complex tensions between state and region. "The city will not be able to prepare itself properly for the celebrations or be able to live at all as long as it does not have good administration, or a sterling manager," Putin's envoy Melikov concluded, as Derbent's mayor cowered.

Two Numbers

600

Britons who have joined Islamist militants such as Isis. Only France is thought to have more nationals fighting in Iraq and Syria.

480

The number of Muslims in the British Army as of this February. This is less than 1% of the army's total strength.

Health

Millions of Ukrainian children at risk from new epidemics as vaccination rate falls

Maxim Tucker Kiev

✉@MaxRTucker

Ukraine is in imminent danger of experiencing the first polio epidemic Europe has seen for decades, health experts have revealed, warning that millions of children are at risk from a range of crippling or fatal infectious diseases, including measles, diphtheria and rubella.

The rate of protection against contagious disease in the country has dropped rapidly since 2008, when a 16-year-old boy died days after he was given a shot against measles and rubella, leading to a media storm.

Although the United Nations concluded that the death was unrelated to the vaccine, demand for vaccines fell dramatically to what the UN describes today as “zero coverage”. With an average of 500,000 children born each year in Ukraine, the number of infants vulnerable to infection is approaching three million.

Now the risk has been exacerbated by the conflict raging in the east of the country, which has driven hundreds of thousands of refugees into crowded camps and shelters where diseases can spread rapidly.

“Countries in conflict or financial crisis are usually the ones that fall prey to these types of epidemics,” Nitzan explains. “It is a terrible, terrible situation. We are totally in fear of an outbreak. I’m surprised it hasn’t happened yet.”

Nitzan’s team in Ukraine have already had one scare. A handful of civilians fleeing the fighting in eastern Ukraine came to a World Health Organization clinic with high fever, rashes and red eyes in the last week of March, leading to UN doctors

sounding the alarm about a possible measles outbreak.

Patients were isolated and health workers raced to retrace their movements to discover who else may have been exposed, before the laboratory results came back negative.

UN humanitarian aid is propping up Ukraine’s crumbling primary care system in government-held territory, but east of the conflict line, the situation is far worse.

Government restrictions and security concerns prevent UN aid crossing the front line, with only three UN humanitarian aid convoys dispatched to rebel-held territories since the

conflict began. The WHO has also yet to persuade the rebels to allow them to treat patients.

“We’re negotiating how and when [the next convoy] will be done and through which checkpoints it will be sent,” says Dr Ogtay Gozalov, who leads the WHO’s mobile teams in eastern Ukraine. “We can’t send the convoys unless both sides agree.”

Hundreds of thousands of vaccines are en route from Canada and expected to arrive in the next fortnight, but Nitzan warns they won’t cover all the country’s needs.

The UN says that Ukraine urgently needs more

international medical support if it is to prevent an outbreak, one which could have far-reaching consequences for a Europe increasingly complacent about preventable diseases.

“In many countries where parents were not exposed to polio and other diseases in their youth they feel safe,” Nitzan adds. “Without the vaccines it’s clear that we will have outbreaks.”

The Ukrainian Health Ministry played down the problem, saying it had a vaccination programme but required international support. The ministry declined to comment further.



Fleeing into fresh danger: disease can spread rapidly in camps for refugee families like this one from Donetsk



Red alert: demonstrators opposed to the mining project and police clashed in April in Athens

Economics

Greece sits on a gold mine as row between Syriza and extraction company escalates

Luke Hurst London

✉@HurstWords

A gold mine is at the centre of a fierce row in Greece between the Left-wing Syriza government and a Canadian mining company that has thrust simmering local tensions on to the national stage.

A battle between the energy and environment minister, Panagiotis Lafazanis, who hails from the ultra-Left faction of Syriza, and Hellas Gold which operates the Skouries mine in Halkidiki, has escalated after the government revoked a licence for the construction of an ore-grinding facility. The move is likely to cost jobs and lead to the government losing out on valuable export revenue.

Expanding the mining projects could be lucrative for a country in desperate need of

funds. In total the mines in Halkidiki hold around eight million ounces of gold as well as significant amounts of other metals, which would make Greece around €500m per year in export revenues by 2017, according to Eldorado Gold, the Canadian parent company of Hellas Gold.

Eldorado has already invested around €400m in Halkidiki since 2012, employing around 2,000 people, with plans to invest an extra €700m and hire 1,000 more employees by 2020. Unemployment in Greece currently runs at 26%, the highest of any EU country.

But Lafazanis says the environmental studies the mining permits were based upon will be reassessed. Other Syriza politicians, including local MP Katerina Igglezi, also oppose the mine, citing

environmental concerns and the negative impact the industry could have on tourism in Halkidiki. Around 4,000 miners and supporters marched on Athens to protest against the decision to revoke the licence, but Lafazanis suggested Eldorado was behind the demonstration, accusing the company of trying to blackmail the Greek government. The row is indicative of the tension between Syriza's ideals and the pressure to raise revenue to pay off its international creditors. Greece is due to pay a €200m bailout instalment to the IMF on 1 May ahead of a further €750m payment on 12 May.

The company plan on beginning extraction next year, and the ore-grinding facility is needed as part of this production process.

Anti-mining activists say the

dispute is tearing the area's local towns apart as people clash over job opportunities and investment on one side, and the mining's impact on the environment and the tourism industry on the other. Fifty-five people connected to anti-mining protests are still facing charges following a spate of arrests in 2013.

Dimitrios Katsikas from the Hellenic Foundation for European and Foreign Policy, a think tank, says that the decision to rescind the licences was politically motivated. "It's something they said they wanted to do before, and they just fulfilled their pre-election campaign despite the fact that it sends a negative message in terms of investment in Greece, and of course it has a negative effect on the people in the area in terms of employment."

Perspectives

Germany

A 36-year-old Moroccan asylum seeker was left badly injured after dousing himself with petrol and setting himself alight in the northwestern state of Lower Saxony. The suicide attempt was carried out after German officials refused his application for asylum.

Russia

A provocative performance by a troupe of teenage girls has been described as "insulting" by children's rights ombudsman Pavel Astakhov. The video of the girls, which has attracted more than four million views, shows them dressed as orange and black bees, colours associated with Russian patriotism.

Norway

A Norwegian Labour MP has spoken out about her experience of rape at the hands of a 40-year-old man when she was just 15. Her comments in a national newspaper have prompted thousands of other women to share their stories of sexual harassment using the hashtag #jegharopplevd, or "I have experienced".



Italy

The Turin Shroud has gone on display for the first time in five years, prompting over a million to book their place to see the relic. Devotees will be able to view the shroud, for free, although for just a few minutes.



Unshaggy dog story

Groomers cut the hair of pet dogs as they attend a pet barber qualification test in Changsha, Hunan province in China. Dogs have enjoyed a precipitous climb in status in recent years from livestock to glamour pet. During the Olympics, areas of China even banned the sale of dog meat in restaurants.

US elections

Raw Republicans make a virtue of inexperience in presidential race

Matthew Cooper Washington

✉@mattzcoop

Rick Perry was peeved. The Texas governor, once thought a leading Republican candidate, has been struggling. It's little wonder then that Perry - with 14 years under his cowboy belt and the title of longest-serving governor of the nation's second most populous state - is making a full-throated case for experience.

At the mid-April Republican Leadership Summit in New Hampshire, he took thinly veiled shots at the three first-term Republican senators who have so far announced that they will be running for president - Ted Cruz of Texas, Rand Paul of Kentucky and Marco Rubio of Florida. "Do you want to take a chance on someone who doesn't have an executive track record?" Perry asked reporters. "When you

walk off the Senate floor, you walk off the Senate floor. You don't walk away from things when you're governor. You have to deal with things."

US Republicans face a stark choice between experienced candidates and relative political newbies as the race to become the party's nominee for the 2016 presidential election gets under way. Cruz, Paul and Rubio are all posing as the politicians of the future, while older candidates are struggling to turn their experience into a virtue.

Rick Santorum, a 2012 GOP presidential candidate, also voiced his frustrations about the trend to *Newsweek*. "This isn't on the job training," he said, noting his work as Republican senator from 1995 to 2007.

Five years ago, Rand Paul was an ophthalmologist in Kentucky. Cruz and Rubio lacked national or gubernatorial experience but they had records as Texas

Attorney General and Florida's Speaker of the House respectively. Each of them knocked off an establishment candidate in their Republican primary and then won Senate seats. What's more, their status as relative outsiders could stand them in good stead if they go on to face Hillary Clinton, currently viewed as the frontrunner for the Democratic nomination, who is still seen as an establishment candidate.

Political scientists who have looked at experience as a predictor of success have failed to find a clear relationship between time holding office and accomplishments in the White House. However, in 2008, the Pew Research Center, asked voters what word came to mind when they heard the name Barack Obama and "inexperienced" was the most common response, but he was successful nonetheless.

Austerity drives Spain to adultery as divorce becomes unaffordable

Conor Gaffey London

✉@ConorGaffey

The eurozone's economic crisis is driving Spaniards who can't afford expensive divorces to have affairs outside marriage, according to an extramarital dating website.

Noel Biderman, CEO of Ashley Madison - which hopes to float later this year on the London Stock Exchange - says that some 1.3 million Spaniards have signed up to the website in the past five years.

"In hard economic times we haven't just been a recession-proof business, we've been a recession-growth business," says Biderman.

Spain currently has one of the highest divorce rates in Europe, with 61 out of every 100 Spanish marriages ending in divorce. Madrid and Barcelona are the cheating hotspots, accounting respectively for 12.9% and 8.5% of the website's national membership.

Two-thirds of Ashley Madison's male and female Spanish users are aged between 30 and 50, while three-quarters fall into middle-income brackets of those earning €23,000-€70,000 per annum.

Canadian Biderman also says that his company is looking to break into the Islamic world, where he thinks that his website could protect people who would otherwise face execution for adultery.

In Turkey, Ashley Madison has almost 19,000 members, while Biderman claims that 35,000 people in Saudi Arabia attempt to access the site each month.

"In countries where people are put in danger by having affairs, we offer them a more secret and secure way of doing



Until mañana: six out of 10 Spanish marriages end in divorce

it that hopefully will preserve their freedom," says Biderman.

Biderman is estimated to have amassed a net worth of \$100m since founding the Toronto-based company in 2001. In addition to its clients in Spain, Ashley Madison has 1.1 million registered users in the UK, while Italy, Germany and France all have between 600,000-700,000 members. Worldwide, the company claims to have 34 million members in 46 countries.

Biderman says Ashley Madison has received a much more positive reaction from European investors than from those in North America.

"When it comes to things like nudity and sexuality, the Europeans have always been much further ahead than the North Americans," he says.

"The Europeans are very respectful of the fact I have built a global business."

Last week, Biderman announced that he will float Ashley Madison on the London Stock Exchange later this year.

Carlos Cremades, vice-president of the Madrid-based civil association, Spanish Family Forum, says websites such as Ashley Madison trivialise marriage and can be damaging to children.

"It's something to be deeply worried about. Not only are you hurting the relationship with your partner but more importantly with your children," says Cremades.

While rejecting calls for government blocks on advertising by extramarital dating websites, Cremades says marriage should be viewed akin to an employment contract, which people should not be encouraged to break.

"Marriage is a relationship of love, but it's also a contract," he says.

If I ruled the world



Jean-Jacques Dordain

Jean-Jacques Dordain is the director general of the European Space Agency

One law I would pass: Free education guaranteed for every child.

Who I would ennobel: The Apollo 8 crew, the first humans to discover planet Earth from the Moon, witnessing its beauty, fragility and uniqueness.

One thing I would ban: The age of retirement. Retirement is a personal choice. Experience is not a handicap, in particular when it comes to being successful in education and even for being an astronaut.

Who I would exile to Siberia: What's wrong with Siberia? It's not the only place of exile in history. ESA sends its astronauts to Siberia for training, so, for me, it's a place for the future!

Where I would build my palace: On board a space station as a model of cooperation on planet Earth. On board the current space station, six astronauts from five partner countries are living together safely thanks to co-operation between 6,000 people across three continents.

The book every child would have to read: *The Little Prince* by Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, so that they can learn about responsibility, love and how difficult it is to protect roses from baobabs.



Caroline Roche
School Librarian

Discouraging cyber bullying

"Recently I passed an instance of cyber bullying straight on to the child protection officer. It may seem like harmless banter, but you don't know whether it's a one-off or a constant issue."

Caroline Roche is a chartered member of the Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals. She runs a large school library. At lunchtime she is solely responsible for 50 to 60 boys. Previously there were nooks and crannies for pupils to sit and work quietly. Caroline changed the room layout to be able to see all computer screens at once, "lessening the chance of children sending inappropriate things".

"We discourage cyber bullying by discussing what is appropriate, using examples like a teacher in America who was sacked for her Facebook statuses. Some pupils said it was OK because she was on holiday. I pointed out that, as professionals, we're on duty the whole time, which made them think about what they might post."

"Another way of discouraging inappropriate use of technology is to show good things they can do with their iPads and phones: revision, the online library, QR codes, designing apps. It's about a positive approach towards the technology, not just monitoring what they shouldn't do."



Edited by
Andy Friedman
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Society

Baltic states say Norway, UK and Finland have stolen their children

Felicity Capon London

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Several Eastern European countries have declared war on child protection agencies in Norway, Finland and the UK, claiming that they are breaking up families based on little or no conclusive evidence.

The issue has come to a head in Lithuania after a television chat show accused the Norwegian child protection services, Barnevernet, of seizing the seven-year-old son of a Lithuanian mother, Gražina Leščinskiene, earlier this year, after the boy showed signs of "sexualised behaviour".

According to chat show *An Hour with Ruta*, Barnevernet routinely takes Lithuanian children from their parents as they are a "sought-after commodity" - a claim strongly denied by Norway.

The fall-out has become so toxic in Lithuania that the Norwegian ambassador there has hired a PR company to dispel the negative opinions of Norway being broadcast by the Lithuanian media. "This is a huge issue in Lithuania right now," says Daiva Petkeviciute, a Lithuanian living in Norway, who works for the Oslo-based group Human Rights House Network. "The first thing Lithuanians say when I tell them I live in Norway is, 'How do you still have your kids?'"

Meanwhile, a Latvian child living in the UK was removed from her mother in 2010 after the 21-month-old girl was allegedly found at home alone. The child was then placed with foster parents and is now living with adoptive British parents.

The mother denies her child was left alone and accuses the local authority of "forced adoption". Earlier this month



Parted: Gražina Leščinskiene and her son, taken into care in Norway

the Latvian parliament issued a formal complaint to the Speaker of the House of Commons about the conduct of British social services. The head of the child affairs cooperation division at the Latvian Ministry of Justice, Agris Skudra, said Britain had failed to notify Latvia that the child had been removed from its parents, thus depriving relatives of being given the chance to care for the child.

"The only thing [the social services] have done is apologise for missing a significant step in the adoption process, but for the mother and Latvian institutions this is not a relief. Apologising and saying we didn't know something is not good enough," Skudra says.

There has also been growing anger in the Czech Republic over a case that occurred in 2011. The two sons of a Czech mother were removed by Norway's child protection agency after the parents were suspected of violence and sexual abuse. They were placed

with different foster families. Earlier this year, Czech President Miloš Zeman accused Norway of "behaving like Nazis", and a petition that backs the mother has attracted almost 10,000 signatures. "In the eyes of Europeans, Norway has become a country that takes children away from their parents excessively," says Czech MEP Tomáš Zdechovský.

Wild theories circulating on Lithuanian social media suggest that Russian propaganda could be behind the discord. At the end of last year, the Russian Children's Rights Commissioner accused Norway and Finland of "terrorising" Russian families living in Scandinavian nations.

Norwegian ambassador to Lithuania, Dag Halvorsen, says a care order is only taken as a last resort. He blames cultural differences for the crisis, an opinion echoed by Lithuanians and Norwegians alike, who point out that acceptable child discipline differs vastly between different countries and generations.

Height of danger

Nepalese porters walk up a path high above the north-eastern town of Namche Bazar, as they head to pick up goods from a town at an upper elevation. Local porters like these two men make roughly anywhere from \$40-60 a month for their back-breaking work, often at altitudes above 3,000 metres. Poor equipment often causes life-threatening injuries to porters. Last month marked a year since the deadliest avalanche hit Mount Everest, killing 16 Nepalese Sherpa guides.



Technology

New apps to fight back against Isis on social media

Lauren Walker New York

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An American startup is to launch an online counter-attack on Isis later this year with two new apps aimed at combating Isis propaganda.

One 2 One, as it is called, is designed to identify people using overtly extremist rhetoric or imagery on social media while Come Back 2 Us seeks to help those wishing to return home after joining Isis.

Both are the creation of Affinis Labs, co-founded by Shahed Amanullah, a self-proclaimed serial entrepreneur and former senior adviser for technology at the US State Department, and Quintan Wiktorowicz, former senior director for community partnerships at the White House National Security Council. "Part of the reason Isis's campaign is so effective is because it understands so well the audience it is going after," says Amanullah. "Isis understands youth frustration and its fascination with violence, and it understands that the imagery

and graphics that you see in Hollywood will attract these people."

The launch of the two apps represents a new chapter in the West's attempts to stem the tide of recruits travelling to join the fighting in Syria and Iraq. With Isis reportedly faltering on the ground as supply lines are disrupted, oil revenues dry up and coalition air strikes get more accurate, the focus is shifting to the war on the internet.

Isis's social media strategy has provided a direct line into the bedrooms of young would-be jihadis. Affinis Labs is one of several businesses now aiming to end that dominance.

Amanullah says young Muslims have been specially trained to counsel their peers and "talk them down from the ledge". Come Back 2 Us allows friends and family to post messages to loved ones abroad. If foreign fighters regret having joined Isis, they can click a panic button and provide information to be sent to government contacts who can help them return home safely.

Although the site is completely coded, there are a few kinks to be worked out before it goes live, none of which is technical. The creators want to make sure family members and friends are not targeted for posting on the site. Moreover, they want guarantees that the fighters won't be automatically locked up once they return. Denmark is trialling rehabilitation programmes for those returning from fighting alongside Isis, while the Netherlands has either barred them from the country or forced them to wear tracking ankle bracelets. The US doesn't yet have a clear policy. Affinis Labs will wait for government assurance before activating the site in any one country.

"We can't convince them to come back when they will just go to jail," says Amanullah. "And I don't think we need to consign them to death or a lifetime in jail because they made a stupid mistake." If anything, the returned fighters could be an asset, he argues - warning their peers about the dangers of joining.

The week ahead

Monday 27 April

The national holiday of King's Day (Koningsdag) is celebrated in the Netherlands, marking the birth of King Willem-Alexander, right.



Tuesday 28 April

Greek finance minister Yanis Varoufakis and state minister Panagiotis Nikoloudis meet Swiss finance ministry officials in Athens to discuss closer tax co-operation.

Wednesday 29 April

Japanese prime minister Shinzō Abe becomes the country's first leader to address the US Senate and House of Representatives during his eight-day state visit.

Thursday 30 April

A BBC Question Time election special airs with David Dimbleby grilling British Prime Minister David Cameron, deputy PM Nick Clegg and opposition leader Ed Miliband.

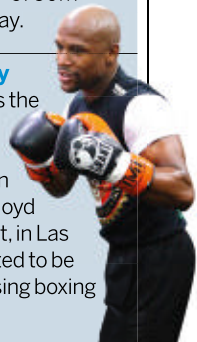
The 40th anniversary of the fall of Saigon in 1975 when northern Vietnamese forces captured the southern capital, ending the war with the southern regime and US forces.

Friday 1 May

Greece is due to pay a €200m bailout instalment to the IMF ahead of a further €750m payment on 12 May.

Saturday 2 May

In what is billed as the fight of the century, Manny Pacquiao takes on the undefeated Floyd Mayweather, right, in Las Vegas. It's predicted to be the highest-grossing boxing match in history.





**Adam LeBor
in Budapest**

✉@adamlebor

Politics

April is the killing month in the line of blood through modern history

A century ago, on 24 April 1915, Ottoman authorities began to arrest hundreds of Armenian intellectuals. They were deported and most were later executed. The day is now commemorated worldwide as the start of the Armenian genocide, when hundreds of thousands - Armenians say 1.5 million - were driven into the desert to die or were murdered.

In Hungary, 16 April, Holocaust Remembrance Day, marks the start of the ghettoisation of Hungarian Jewry in 1944. Four hundred and thirty thousand Jews were deported from the ghettos to Auschwitz, where most were killed on arrival. On 17 April 1975, the Khmer Rouge captured Phnom Penh, the Cambodian capital, and began their programme of extermination.

The Bosnian war began on 5 April 1992, when Bosnian Serbs laid siege to the capital Sarajevo. Two years and a day later, on 6 April 1994, a plane carrying the presidents of Rwanda and Burundi was shot down. The Rwandan genocide began that evening. In three months, Hutu extremists killed 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus.

"Twentieth-century genocides share striking similarities," says Khatchig Mouradian, co-ordinator of the Armenian Genocide Programme at Rutgers University. "The role of ideology, the use of propaganda, the methods used to annihilate differences and transfer assets to the dominant group, to name a few."

In Turkey the past remains hotly contested. Turkish officials strongly deny that a genocide took place. The Armenians, they say, were not slaughtered but deported because they sided with the Russians during the First World War. Recep Tayyip Erdogan, the president, last year became the first Turkish leader to offer condolences to the Armenian community. But after Pope Francis referred to the deaths of the Armenians as "the first genocide of the 20th century", Turkey recalled its ambassador to the Vatican. A vote by the European Parliament to refer to the killings as "genocide" provoked similar fury.

Some argue that the Herero tribe suffered the first modern genocide. In 1904 some 65,000 Herero, in present-day Namibia, were slaughtered by German troops. The methodology was strikingly similar to that used in Armenia: the Herero were driven into the desert en masse and left to die. Survivors, and the

mixed-race children of Herero rape victims, were studied by German scientists for their theories of eugenics. "The Nazis adopted the race research and experimentation that occurred in the Herero genocide," says Mouradian. "They looked at the late Ottoman empire's and early Turkish republic's methods of homogenisation and ethnic cleansing with profound admiration, learning

“The Nazis looked at the late Ottoman empire's methods of homogenisation and cleansing with profound admiration

much from it." A key lesson was the use of irregulars to carry out atrocities.

Professor Taner Akcam, author of *A Shameful Act*, an authoritative study of the Armenian genocide, notes how Ottoman prisoners were released and then specially trained

before being unleashed on Armenian civilians.

During the Holocaust the brutality of locally recruited auxiliaries in Nazi-occupied states shocked even the SS. For the Nazis, killing Jews was a military operation like any other. For their local allies, murder and humiliation was a pleasure, carried out with relish as they sought to prove their loyalty to the new racial order.

A similar pattern emerged in the Yugoslav wars of the 1990s. Prisoners were released to form paramilitary groups which carried out many of the worst atrocities. The paramilitaries operated under a separate chain of command, reporting to the Ministry of Interior. "Hardened criminals were freed. They had to do some nasty stuff, but they could feel patriotic," says Tim Judah, author of *The Serbs*. "They could expunge their criminal past, get a free pass for looting and feel they were doing something good for the nation."

In Rwanda members of the Interahamwe, a Hutu paramilitary force, carried out the killings with clubs and machetes. The Shabiha militia, a former smuggling organisation, has been blamed for some of Syria's worst atrocities. It was set up with state support but operates at arms' length.

A line of blood runs through modern history: from the deserts of Namibia and Syria to Auschwitz, Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and now back to Syria. "The perpetrators," says Mouradian, "repeat history precisely because they have learnt from the past."



Lost family: Lucin Khatcherian, 106, last survivor of the Armenian genocide

Business

Innovation

Danish companies take on staff with disabilities to gain a competitive edge

Elisabeth Braw Copenhagen
 @elisabethbraw

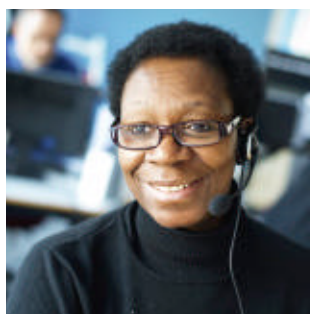
Danish telemarketing company Telehandelshuset has seen revenues and staff double over the past two years. Its agents are among the best in the business; they book meetings, make sales and do fundraising on behalf of clients. They are also blind, and part of a pioneering Danish trend: employing people with disabilities to help outperform competitors.

“Blind people have superior communication skills, and almost every company needs someone conducting telephone sales on their behalf,” explains Connie Hasemann, Telehandelshuset’s CEO.

Glad Design taps into the design skills of mentally disabled people with great success: it now supplies Tiger, the booming Danish homeware chain. At Bornholms Mosteri, which makes fruit juices and

cidars now sold to Noma and other exclusive restaurants, more than half of the employees have a history of mental illness and take special pride in the success of their beverages. The Specialisterne and BOAS Specialister, two firms specialising in IT services, employ people with autism, benefitting from their exceptionally detail-oriented minds. Gamle Mursten (“Old Brick”) employs people with mental illnesses to use a pioneering technology that allows old bricks to be cleaned of cement in a cheap and environmentally friendly way.

Today Denmark even has an accelerator for companies employing people with disabilities; 22 such companies have graduated from the three-year-old Sociale Kapitalfond’s accelerator programme, and the fund has invested in another five. “Growing global competition affects marginalised people in



inclusion policy: Sarah Paulson, a visually impaired worker at Telehandelshuset

developed countries because it takes away entry-level jobs in their home countries,” says Lars Jannick Johansen, founder and CEO of the fund. “But we’re also living in an age where uniqueness is important. Companies have to provide good service at a good price, but they also have to distinguish themselves, and employing marginalised people is a good way of doing that.”

In OECD countries, 19% of less educated people, and 11%

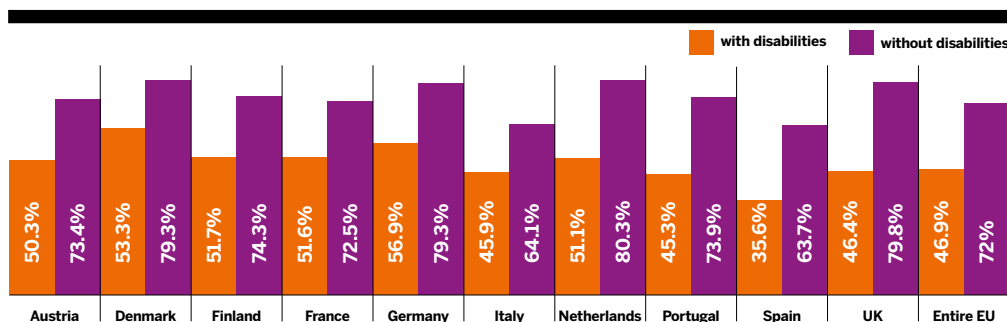
among the better educated, have some form of disability. The companies in the Sociale Kapitalfond’s programmes, including the Telehandelshuset and Bornholms Mosteri, now employ and train some 730 residents with disabilities.

Around Denmark, the number of people with disabilities employed by private companies is surging. According to the national labour agency Jobindsats, last year almost 10,000 Danes with disabilities worked in the private sector, up from just over 5,000 in 2009. The number employed in the public sector is about three times larger.

“The trend took off in 2011 and has grown stronger over the recent years,” says Morten Hyllegaard, a director at Copenhagen-based Monday Morning, Scandinavia’s largest independent think tank. “Danish companies take social responsibility very seriously, especially regarding the unemployed with mental issues or problems with abuse. Ignorance and prejudice are the main barriers against more companies following the trend.”

Danish entrepreneurs have spotted a promising opportunity. “In the past three years we’ve looked at 450 companies,” reports Johansen. “And there’s a growing number who’re either in this space or want to enter it.” Hasemann, for her part, is considering international expansion.

Employment rate of those with and without disabilities, aged 20-64



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Under my thumb

Sumo wrestler Yoshikaze lifts a boy during the Grand Sumo tour at Aoyagi Park Gymnasium in Mito, Ibaraki, Japan. The month-long tour features sumo drumming, folk songs and ring-entering and bow-twirling ceremonies alongside the bouts themselves.

Banking

Tech companies seek their cut of €10trillion foreign exchange trade

Luke Hurst London

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The disruption wrought by the likes of Spotify, Skype and Uber on the music, telecomms and transportation industries is about to hit banks and financial services as tech companies seek to shake up banking.

That's according to the executive chairman of Transferwise, whose peer-to-peer foreign exchange company has integrated with an accounting app in another sign that web startups are eyeing bigger chunks of the market in financial services.

Estonian Taavet Hinrikus, says the deal with online accountancy app Xero will open up the money-saving service to thousands more small and medium sized businesses

(SMEs). Xero currently has around 400,000 users in 350 countries, and they will be able simply to select a Transferwise checkbox in the app when paying invoices overseas, saving them the 1-5% fees typically charged by banks for currency exchange transactions.

Transferwise is just one of a host of online forex platforms to cut out the middleman, and the company charges a flat commission of 0.5% on transactions, based on the interbank exchange rate.

"We estimate that between five to 10 trillion euros move across country borders every year. Ten years ago all of that money was handled by banks. Now we have PayPal, Western Union, and a number of other people working in this space, but it's a huge space," says Hinrikus.

The smart money

Computers' quantum leap to bring economy up to speed



Rory Ross

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Quantum computers, the next generation of high-powered super-computers, are about to transform the business world. And the precursors of this new generation already exist.

Unlike conventional computers, quantum computers process data in parallel, mimicking, if you like, the human brain. A quantum computer can recreate the behaviour of atoms, model chemical reactions and simulate nature itself, making it capable of large-scale simultaneous computation.

Any business or activity that relies on searching, crunching and storing large volumes of data will soar. The term "needle in a haystack" will become irrelevant. Sectors where demand exists include financial markets, insurance, intelligence, cyber-security, internet, medicinal and pharmaceutical research, defence, energy, database management, logistics and communications - ie the entire modern economy. Quantum computers will redefine "real-world".

Ilyas Khan, 52, runs Cambridge Quantum Computers, a pioneer that span out of the Cambridge University maths department in 2013, and has already developed one of only two operating systems for

quantum computers. Khan listed the three "most obvious" business applications: "First, cryptography and cyber-security for banks, insurance companies and personal finance companies," he says. "We will all be more secure thanks to quantum computers."

Second: financial services and markets. "Uneven distribution of market-sensitive information that allows high-frequency trading will be smoothed out," says Khan. "Even the most powerful Cray computers can't do this. Markets will become efficient. You will be able to make investment decisions based purely on

The term "needle in a haystack" will become irrelevant

empirical evidence not emotion." The banking sector will benefit. "How can a bank reconcile risk or asset exposure? Present-day technology takes time and entails compromise. A quantum computer can do it instantly."

Third: medical science, especially genome analysis. "The array of variables in a typical genome analytical model is 25,000, so the number of possible outcomes is 25,000 squared - a huge number. If you go to the NHS and ask for a genome analysis, it will take weeks. A quantum computer can do it sooner than you can blink."

According to Khan, within the Venture Capital community, quantum computer is "is the hot investment now".

'I'm driven by honesty. HSBC in Switzerland was a tax haven in itself, a wilderness where whatever could be done, was done'

Hervé Falciani



By Robert Chalmers

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"There have been times," Hervé Falciani tells me, "when I've wondered if I was losing touch with reality. Could I really have seen what I saw, and revealed the things that I did, while the financial world continued as if nothing had happened?"

Falciani, sometimes called "the Ed Snowden of banking," is the whistleblower who, in 2008, committed the most momentous theft of data in banking history. The former systems engineer at the Swiss subsidiary of HSBC downloaded details of more than 100,000 potential tax evaders and made the information available to the account holders' national tax agencies. Viewed by some as a felon, by others as a martyr for justice, he has been wanted by the Swiss for seven years. Falciani, 43, can still call on two bodyguards, supplied by the French government. Today, in this secluded Paris café, he arrives alone.

HSBC has acknowledged that

its Swiss arm was guilty of advising customers on evading tax. The bank's executive chairman in the relevant period was Stephen Green, who left in 2010 to become a Conservative trade minister in the House of Lords.

"Green was recently ambushed by Channel 4 News's Alex Thomson, while declaiming from a London pulpit," I remind Falciani.

"I've seen the footage.

"He claimed he didn't know about the malpractice in Switzerland. Is that credible?"

"It is absolutely impossible," Falciani claims, "that Stephen Green did not know. The software employed was the direct result of a commercial strategy. Validation of that strategy came from the top down. He could have said: 'I knew there was a problem, but I didn't realise how bad it was'. But to deny all knowledge? That's tantamount to saying, 'I am not a banker'."

"Was Switzerland controlled by London?"

"What do you think?"

"An American author once declared - albeit in a moment of self-righteousness - that investigative journalism is God's work. How would you describe banking during your time at Swiss HSBC?"

"As a wilderness where whatever could be done, was done."

HSBC, Falciani says, was "a tax haven in itself".

"Criminal?"

"Yes."

"How many people have

been jailed as a result of your leaks?"

"One," he says. "Me."

Falciani was born in Monaco, where his father Lucien was a banker.

"He told me, when I went to his bank as a child, 'Don't steal so much as a sweet from here. If you do, I'll be sacked.' I grew up with an idealistic vision of finance."

When, I ask him, did banking go to the bad? A gradual process, he replies, "Accelerated by technology, notably the deep web."

Hervé worked for casinos, before joining the Swiss branch of HSBC in 2001. In 2006, charged with upgrading security software, he began downloading information on what he considered suspect accounts. He fled to Nice in 2008, then to Barcelona where he had himself arrested: the only sure way, he says, of bringing the data into the public domain.

Falciani served five months in prison in Madrid. The Spanish, mindful that he had exposed an estimated \$200bn of fiscal fraud, declined to extradite him to Switzerland. The full, labyrinthine story, is related in his new book, *Séisme sur la planète finance*, [Earthquake on Planet Money] sadly unavailable in English.

His aim, he says, is to return to Geneva, facing probable arrest, then give evidence to an enquiry in Spain.

Falciani has been married twice and has one daughter. He claims he has no permanent

home, but is sheltered by activists campaigning for a law to protect whistleblowers. He is collaborating with many national tax agencies, and assists the Spanish Left-wing party Podemos.

"Are you a prospective candidate?"

"No. A source of information."

His enemies have dismissed him as a chancer, looking for easy money, though there is no evidence that he ever sold data.

"I'm driven by honesty. There is something exhilarating," he says, "about revealing a truth."

"How many British names are on your list?"

"About 6,000."

"You've talked about jail cells and bodyguards; is tax evasion really that important?"

"Yes," Falciani says, "because it removes money intended for the common good."

HM Revenue & Customs obtained the files in 2010. In Britain, there has been one prosecution and £135m recovered. It's hard, I suggest, to envisage radical reform.

"The European political consensus defends the bankers," he says. "But if we get a government - in Spain, say - that fiercely attacks corruption, banks could be exposed to a point where change becomes inevitable." The current generation of bankers, he argues, "have had their time. Now it is our time. And," Falciani adds, "We have to seize the opportunity. Swiftly, and with vigour."



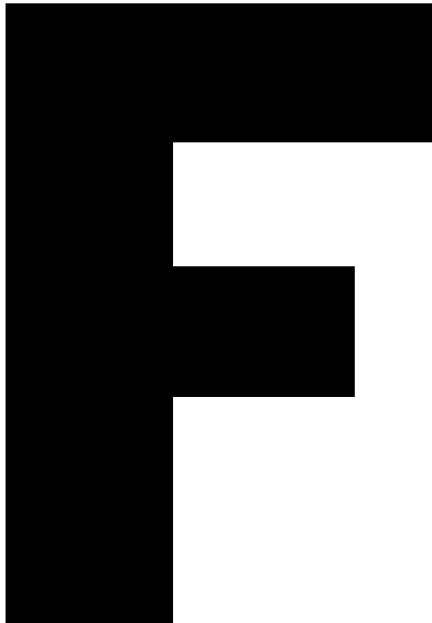
An aerial photograph showing a stark contrast between a developed residential area and a vast, desolate desert landscape. On the right side, a cluster of houses with reddish-brown roofs is visible, some with solar panels installed. A paved road curves through the neighborhood. To the left and in the foreground, a massive, light-colored sand dune has shifted, partially burying the edge of the road and the desert floor. The sand is dotted with small, dry desert shrubs. The overall scene illustrates the impact of extreme weather events, such as dust storms, in an arid region.

EL DORADO TURNS TO DUST

The Golden State clings to its image as a true paradise: beaches, vast green lawns, eternal sunshine and fertile soil. But the truth is that today California is arid, dying through lack of water, as it battles its worst drought for more than 1,000 years

BY ELIJAH WOLFSON





elia Marcus, chairwoman of the State Water Control Resources Board, is trying really hard to convince me that the California dream isn't dead.

We're driving in my beat-up Volkswagen through the Central Valley, just south of Sacramento, and even here the effects of the drought are stunning: the hills to the west, usually soft and green, are burnt-crisp and yellowed. The fields spreading miles in both directions are also toast; they look as if they would crumble under your feet. Here and there crops still live, but they are hedged in on all sides by death.

In the past few years a drought has been slowly strangling California. Low rainfall and record-high temperatures have created a historically devastating climate. One recent study based on tree-ring data suggests that the current drought, which most consider to have started back in 2011, is the worst the area has seen in 1,200 years. Earlier this month, California's annual April Snow Survey, which measures the snowpack in the Sierra Nevada mountains on the day of year where it is typically at its highest, found just 5% of the historic average. The previous low, 25%, was set last year.

Marcus says the good news is that no one denies reality any more; people are ready to talk, and think they have a solution. "It's not really a perfectly crafted plan," she admits, "but it's a promise from this administration about what we were going to prioritise over the next five years."

Governor Jerry Brown had one look at the snowpack results and took the unprecedented step of issuing an executive order that requires cities and towns throughout the state to cut back water usage by a staggering 25%. At a 1 April press briefing announcing the first

mandatory water restrictions in California's history, he talked with some of his typical rough-hewn candidness: "The idea of your nice little green grass getting lots of water every day, that's going to be a thing of the past."

It took decades of work by some of the country's greatest scientists and engineers to create the infrastructure needed to support those lush lawns that Brown verbally laid to waste; California is in many ways the world's greatest geo-engineering project. But there was a fatal flaw in their work. "We had no idea how the water cycle worked" at the time, says Jay Famiglietti, senior water scientist at the Nasa Jet Propulsion Laboratory. "We didn't even know what 'climate change' meant." The ecosystem those mid-century movers of the earth created, so powerful when there is rain and snow, is entirely impotent when it stops.

Welcome to life on Mars

For most of the 20th century, California was as much an ideal as it was a place, sold to transplants as a true paradise - beaches, vast green lawns, eternal sunshine and the country's fertile crescent. But that was a lie; California is not lush, it's arid and dry; more Greece than Grenada. Nature certainly did not intend there to be hundreds of thousands of acres of lawns and orange groves and almond orchards here. Nor could it ever have supported the 38 million people who now live here. The sprawling Southern California megalopolis - bleached by the sun and dessicated by its heat - is like a settlement on Mars: everything it needs to survive is brought in.

It took a unique confluence of irrigation evangelism, engineering knowhow and an appetite for large public works to make California California. It started up north. San Francisco was the state's first urban hub, and as the city grew in the early 20th century, so did its thirst. In 1916, construction began on the Hetch Hetchy water system, a project to dam up its namesake valley and construct waterways to deliver water to the Bay Area. Over the next two decades, engineers built tunnels, dams, reservoirs, hydroelectric power houses and a 150-mile aqueduct; in 1934, the water started to move. It was one of the largest manmade water conveyances in the world, delivering about 260 million gallons per day.

A quick note about measuring water. Chances are, you think of it in terms of gallons. But counting gallons quickly becomes impossible when scaled to the levels of California's needs. The water management industry measures in million acre feet, MAF. It takes over 325,000 gallons to make one acre foot. Hetch Hetchy, which delivered more than

290,000 acre feet per year, was big for its time, but was nothing compared with what was to follow.

The success of Hetch Hetchy begat further feats of engineering, spurred on by some of the country's wealthiest businessmen (including the owners of the Pacific Fruit Express, a joint venture between the Southern Pacific and Union Pacific railroads focused on shipping produce back east) and their evangelists, who had designs on making the Central Valley - which had sun and soil, but no water - the Eden of agriculture. In the late 1930s, the Central Valley Project (CVP) put up its first dams and canals. Today, the CVP stores about 11 MAF of water in 22 reservoirs and delivers 7.4 MAF a year to the Central Valley, irrigating more than three million acres of cropland. Sacramento followed suit in the 1960s, building the State Water Project (SWP), a system of 20 reservoirs that can hold 5.8 MAF, and waterways that criss-cross the state and deliver about 3 MAF annually to over 25 million residents and more than 750,000 acres of agricultural land. Combined, these two water conveyances traverse more than 1,200 miles, and are by far the two largest such projects in the US.

They were also largely responsible for creating what we all think of as California. The CVP helped turn the San Joaquin Valley from a high desert to the country's most important hub of agriculture (a stunning feat of hubris and engineering that the US Geological Survey called "the largest human alteration of the Earth's surface"), while the SWP provides a good chunk of what makes Los Angeles and the Inland Empire livable.

"California [became] associated with producing all the food people eat. And that imagery is very much associated with the rise of Southern California in particular - this paradise where they can just grow oranges," says Robert Chester, an environmental historian at UC Berkeley. "It's the foundation upon which a larger identity is then cemented ... California as the land of opportunity."

The staggering ingenuity of those hydraulic scientists and engineers seduced the state's residents into complacency; they assumed the geeks could always figure out new ways to shift water around. Cut back? Conserve? Not in the Golden State! That attitude still exists in many corners: there have been not entirely facetious proposals to, for example, build a massive pipeline from Alaska down to California's Shasta Lake and construct a channel to shore up the flows of the Colorado (which feed San Diego and other cities) with waters from the Missouri.

Water engineering created "a momentum that took on a life of its own as the panacea",

says Chester. "This same mentality acts as a cultural myopia that prevented the consideration of alternative approaches that incorporate more practical and adaptive responses to limited water."

As the Stanford Woods Institute for the Environment pointed out in a 2014 paper, technological change in the water sector "has generally been marked by stagnation" since the 1970s. A striking comparison can be made with the clean energy sector: from 2000 to 2013, there was \$69bn (€64bn) invested in clean energy, and just \$1.5bn (€1.4bn) invested in water. In the past decade, solar panels have become increasingly efficient and electric cars close to ubiquitous. Meanwhile, we have come up with no new technologies for increasing water supply or lowering demand.

On top of that, the water infrastructure is decaying: The California Urban Water Conservation Council works with 76 different urban water agencies. In 2012, (the last year for which it has data), those agencies lost an estimated 57.3 billion gallons of water.

The recent drought has made clear how obsolete California's water technology has become. The silver lining: it may also force California to invest in new science that can help save the state from itself.

Drinking from the toilet

Take the Interstate 5 highway south 400 miles from Sacramento and you'll end up in Orange County, so named, wrote local historian Jim Sleeper, not for any existing orange groves, but instead for the promise of a paradise in which the citrus might, one day, thrive. As it did. For years, that covenant was fulfilled with waters piped in from the north. Today, in the aptly-named suburb of Fountain Valley, one of the country's most innovative wastewater recycling solutions is weaning the county off those wet imports.

Everything is shiny as hell at the Groundwater Replenishment System. The administrative building is roofed in red Spanish tile, and is air-conditioned to meet your body's every need and dream. There are tidy trophy cases in the hallways and, on leaving, I am given a swag bag that includes A History of Orange County Water District, an 85-page booklet printed on bond paper, full colour. The GWRS is a prodigiously efficient network of thousands of gleaming pipes, hundreds of pneumatic valves and various other plumbing fixtures all operating at full capacity with almost no one in sight.

The GWRS is the world's largest indirect potable water system, producing, on average, 215 acre feet of drinking water a day. It's been in operation since 2008, and is such an unmitigated success that it's already expanding; by the end of May, it



Pipe dreams: Orange County is home to the world's largest indirect potable water system

will be up to 307 acre feet per day. That's enough, says general manager Michael Markus, to provide for the daily water needs of 850,000 people - about one-third of Orange County's residents. "We looked like geniuses in 2008, because we were in the middle of a drought," he says, "and now we look like geniuses again."

The GWRS provides the OC with a drought-resistant source of water, at very reasonable prices: it costs water retailers just \$478 per acre foot. That price is driven down by "subsidies" in the form of grants from an old state water bond. But if you took that out of the equation, says Markus, you are still talking just \$850 - very reasonable compared with the \$1,000 per acre foot it costs to import water from the Colorado River and Northern California. It also requires only half the energy of imported water.

The plumbing is daunting, but the science and water policy implications are fairly straightforward. The Sanitation District is, by law, required to take indoor wastewater (sinks, showers, toilets) and treat it to the point where it is clean enough to dump into the ocean. That, of course, is a massive task ... and a huge waste. So instead, the treated wastewater is sent to the GWRS, which puts it through an

additional three-stage purification process: physical microfiltration (to remove solids, protozoa, bacteria and viruses), reverse osmosis (forcing it through semipermeable membranes in a pressurised vessel to rid it of dissolved salts, organic chemicals, pharmaceuticals and even the smallest of viruses), and UV treatment (to disinfect the water and destroy any last, tiny organic compounds). At the end, it's been thoroughly rid of all contaminants - the GWRS tests for 7,400 compounds as required by its state permit. Its end-product is probably cleaner than what comes out of your tap.

The GWRS is "the best kept secret in Orange County", says James Herberg, the general manager of the OC Sanitation District. Though there are small wastewater recycling plants in California, there is nothing remotely close to the scale of Orange County's project. There are plenty of reasons why, but primarily it's because there hasn't been much appetite for, nor investment in, water recycling technology.

But this brutal drought has spawned many hopeful mimics; Water Board Chairwoman Marcus says the 2014 Water Bond includes \$800m in 1% financing for wastewater projects, and \$1.5bn-worth of requests have come in. "Look for an explosion" in wastewater recycling in coming years, she says. There are already at least 10 substantial potable reuse projects in development, the largest of which is planned for San Diego. Halla Razak, that city's public utilities director, says that in November, it got the green light. In 20 years, she says, one-third of San Diego's water will come from potable reuse.

The Pacific Institute, a non-profit research institute that focuses on water issues, estimates that statewide implementation of efficient wastewater reuse could save 1.2 to 1.8 MAF every year. "To not have ocean discharge would be a fantastic step," says Melissa Meeker, the director of WaterReuse, an NGO focused on promoting more efficient water reclamation. "That's like free water."

Salt water in your wounds

There is, of course, another source of free water, tantalisingly close to the state's biggest cities and not too far from the farmlands, either: the Pacific Ocean. At nearly 64 million square miles, it covers about one-third of the globe's surface and makes the acres of water pumped throughout California seem puny: the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration estimates it contains 660 million cubic kilometres, or 535 trillion acre feet.

The problem, of course, is that you can't drink any of it. Seawater also kills any living plants, so it's useless for agriculture.

Nature did not intend there to be hundreds of thousands of acres of orange groves and almond orchards here

Desalinating seawater at an economically feasible cost has long been the holy grail of water security. And recent projects suggest we might be getting closer.

In the Dutch Antilles in the Caribbean, there have been desal plants since 1928 - today, Aruba has the world's third largest such plant. In the water-poor countries of the Middle East, desalination is the difference between life and death. Saudi Arabia, for example, spent \$7.2bn (€6.65bn) to build the world's largest desal plant, capable of producing about 270 million gallons of drinking water per day. In Israel, 40% of the country's drinking water comes from desalination, and projects in various stages of development are expected to raise that to 70% by 2050.

There are 2,000 desal plants in the US, but most are tiny, servicing the needs of a factory here and there. Every major attempt in the country has been troubled. A 25-million-gallon-per-day plant opened up in 2008 in the Tampa Bay area in Florida, but it took six years longer and cost \$40m more than expected to construct, and rarely runs at full capacity. A three-million-gallon-per-day plant built in Santa Barbara during the 1987-92 drought was completed just days before torrential rains flooded the state in 1993. The plant shut down and hasn't been in operation since.

But down the coast, California's first real investment in the burgeoning technology since then is on the verge of becoming operational. At the southern edge of Carlsbad, an affluent, snoozy strip of coastal suburbia north of San Diego, sits the construction yard of the \$1bn Carlsbad Desalination Project. At the gate, a Frisbee toss from the gleaming and very wet Pacific, I'm met by Peter MacLaggan, the lanky, sun-worn vice president of Poseidon Water. He tells me the plant was originally planned to open in 2016, but the drought has put it on a fast-track, and it could start pumping water as early as next month.

MacLaggan has lived in water-poor San Diego his whole life. When I ask about previous droughts, he tells me what he remembers most is a lake on a friend's family's property to the east. During the drought of the late Seventies, it dried up, and what remained was "so full of fish that you'd throw a rock in and the whole thing would start vibrating. There were catfish that just gave up, and would jump out of the water".

The big problem now, he says, is that San Diego relies far too much on imported water; 85% of it comes from either the Colorado River or up north. The city has been steadily moving to reducing that reliance on outside water. Now, that process will rev up. "San Diego will actually look more like it did 70 years ago, when all

"We have enough to get us through to 2017. But then we go over a proverbial cliff if we aren't able to bring on rain"

of our water was local," MacLaggan says. "We are going to recycle every drop we've got - and get the rest from the ocean."

One of the biggest knocks on desal is that it eats a huge amount of energy. But proponents argue that's a misguided belief based on outdated information. In the Carlsbad project - designed in consultation with IDE Technologies, the Israeli firm that built and manages three of that country's desal plants - there are energy recovery units that take almost all of the latent energy that builds up in the pressurised pumps and redirects it for other uses.

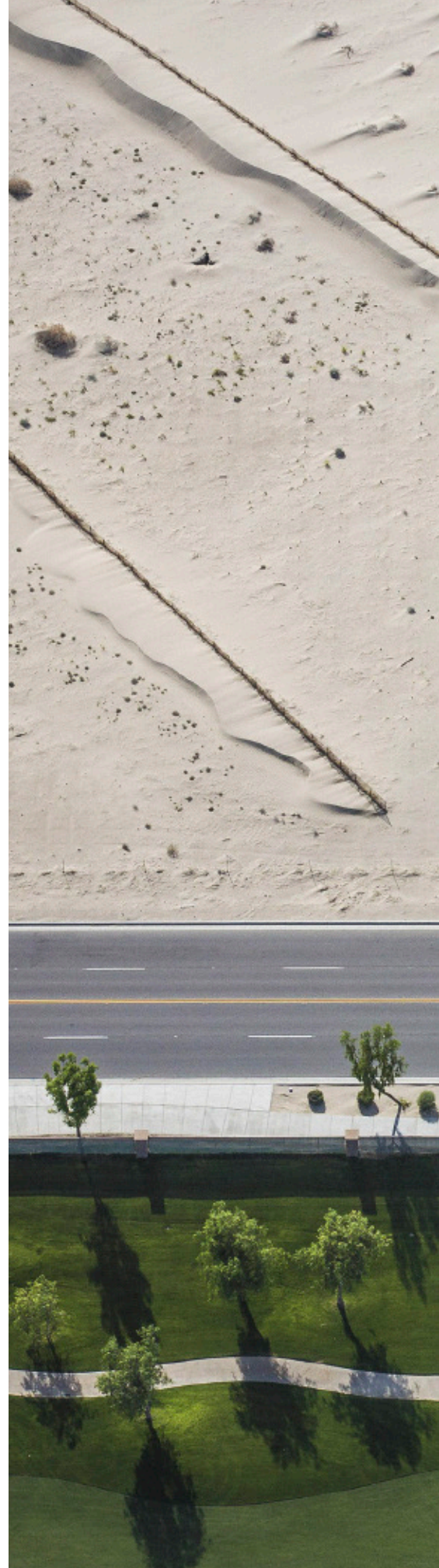
MacLaggan says it works something like the regenerative braking that hybrid cars come with, and calls it a "game-changer". He uses this phrase a lot. "You used to need to push the water through the filtering system two times to get it drinkable, now it's just one." (Game-changer.) "In the old days, the filter membranes lasted three years; now you get eight to 10." (Game-changer.) "The membranes are also so much better that you need less of them." (Game-changer.)

If it works, expect similar plants to mushroom up and down the Pacific coastline. There are at least 18 in development already, including large projects in Huntington Beach in Orange County, Camp Pendleton (a US Marine Corps base about eight miles north of Carlsbad), and Monterey County. And in what could be read as a referendum on the technology, Santa Barbara is bringing its desal plant back on stream.

"We have enough [water] to get us through to 2017," says Joshua Haggmark, Santa Barbara's city water manager. "But then we go over a proverbial cliff if we aren't able to bring on desal, or rain." Well, you can't buy rain, but \$40m (€37m) in capital plus \$5.2m (€4.8m) in annual operating costs can buy Santa Barbara enough desal for 30% of the city's potable water.

Haggmark and other proponents are confident desal will become more cost-efficient, and soon. The cost has gone down considerably in the past 20 years, despite little investment into the technology. "If California would start

Scorched earth: the perfect golf greens of Sun City Palm Desert suck up acres of water





investing in desal, you'd see a spike in investment in the technology," Haggmark says. "You'll see money managers park money there, and you'll see continuing R&D." But many water policy experts aren't so optimistic. They point to the failures of Tampa Bay, Santa Barbara and Australia. "The Australians invested a lot in desal during the millennium drought, and most of them are not being used at the moment" because the energy costs are still too high, says Ellen Hanak, the director of the Water Policy Center and a senior fellow at the Public Policy Institute of California. She says desal only makes sense in places - such as the Middle East - where there are no cheaper alternatives.

"The cost of desal is driven by three things: the cost of land, energy and infrastructure," says Newsha Ajami, director of Urban Water Policy at Stanford University's Water in the West programme. For desal to work economically, she says, you need to eliminate one of those costs.

For example: Israel has some of the cheapest desal water, and when you go deep in the numbers, its "because the land is basically socialised" - for instance, the Ashkelon plant was constructed on land that was provided at no cost by the Israeli government. Similarly, on the Arabian Peninsula, both land and fuel are cheap and plentiful.

On the other hand, land in coastal California is notoriously expensive, and fossil fuels remain relatively expensive. But there is another source of energy that California has in abundance: sun.

The almond tree graveyard

I meet Garrett Rajkovich and his son Nick at a gas-and-fast-food waystation off Interstate 5 in Fresno County. Rajkovich is a third-generation California farmer. His grandparents came from the former Yugoslavia to settle in Santa Clara County; they grew apricots and prunes there. When GE, HP and other early tech companies moved in and the area turned from farm to suburb, his father transplanted the family farming operation to the San Joaquin Valley. Today, Rajkovich farms 1,200 acres here, not too far from where the pavement hits the dirt, and where signs calling for an end to the "Congress-Created Dust Bowl" have been planted.

In recent months, Big Ag has taken a lot of heat for its role in the current water shortages. According to the State Water Board, farms use 32.3 million acre-feet of water annually, about 40% of the state's total water - or 80% of the water used by humans (the remainder mostly flows unimpeded, a legally mandated hedge against environmental disaster) - but only accounts for 2% of the state's \$2.2 trillion gross (€2 trillion) domestic product. By

"We've dug several wells thousands of feet deep and they are perfectly dry. These trees are, for all practical purposes, dead"

now, everyone knows it takes a gallon of water to grow an almond, and many are using that as a rallying cry, calling on Governor Brown to stifle agriculture's water use even further.

Without a doubt, says University of Missouri water historian Karen Piper, "we need to rethink how agriculture is done in California". There is, she says, a long history of wasteful water use in the farming sector. As soon as the CVP was developed, small farms throughout the Valley were encouraged to use the imported water to irrigate their crops - and they were incentivised to be liberal in their usage. "If they didn't use that water, [the Bureau of Reclamation] said it was wasting water, and they'd give it to someone else," says Piper.

Today, efficiency has improved, but not exactly in a way that helps keep water supply up: "They're growing virtually twice as much crop value as they were a decade ago precisely because they've become more efficient," says Marcus. "It's a miracle of food and fibre." But, she adds, "they haven't put in efficiency to put it back in the environment".

The Pacific Institute estimates that we could save a staggering 5.6 to 6.6 MAF every year by enforcing efficiency measures - drip and smart irrigation, for example - statewide. Peter Gleick, the institute's director, is one of many water



Barely there: snowfall on the Sierra Nevada is down to 5% of its historic average this year

policy experts who have called for a statewide mandate requiring more efficient farming standard.

Meanwhile, farms have been forced to cut back on water use significantly. In cities, from Sacramento to San Diego, go into any business or home and try the tap. Chances are pretty good it still flows unimpeded. But many farms - including the Rajkovichs' - have been running on zero water for two years now.

Last year, the CVP released no water; similarly, the SWP only delivered 15% of its planned allocation in 2014. As a result about 5% of the state's cropland was forced to go fallow, resulting in losses of over \$2bn and 17,000 jobs. This year, the CVP's tap will run dry again, and SWP deliveries will be limited to 20% of contracted amounts.

As in any industry, agriculture has winners and losers. The Rajkovich's almond, cherry and grape plants, put into the ground about eight years ago, were grown with water from the CVP. Their allocation in 2014: zero. This year will be the same. And while other farmers have been able to tap into the unregulated groundwater basins beneath their land, Rajkovich had no such luck. "We've dug several wells thousands of feet deep and they are perfectly dry," he says.

He shows me around what is now an almond graveyard, lined neatly with dead or dying trees: "This will be the second year that it hasn't been watered, so these trees are, for all practical purposes, dead, even though they have a few green leaves on them," Rajkovich says. "There is no crop and there's no hope for saving them." So, he's come up with an alternative: tear the orchards out (if he can book one of the companies that do it - their dance cards are full for the next year) and plant a new kind of farm.

He drives me over I-5 and across the California Aqueduct ("the lowest I've ever seen it," he says). A few miles later we sidle up to the North Star project, a 600-acre, 60-megawatt solar farm currently under construction on old, fallow farmlands. If you squint your eyes, the rows of photovoltaic cells mounted on their metal poles don't look that much different than his neatly lined rows of almond trees.

Rajkovich marvels that the parking lot is filled with cars. First Solar, the company developing the North Star project, says it has generated 400 construction jobs that will last through to completion this summer, and that there will be 50 permanent jobs at the site. Meanwhile, there's no work to be had on the Rajkovich farm.

"We've probably lost four or five full-time employees that are here year-round," he says, "but seasonally we're going to lose hundreds." He's already begun talks with solar developers. "It's not

nearly as lucrative as a full-producing almond orchard is,” says Rajkovich.

“However, it’s better than nothing.”

It might also be the future of the Central Valley. Recent research suggests that existing infrastructure in California could support enough solar equipment to exceed the state’s current energy demands by up to five times - or perhaps to supply what’s needed for new, energy-intensive development like wastewater treatment and desal plants. The Carnegie Institute of Science team who came up with that calculation found that there are about 13.8 million acres that could be developed into solar farms without impacting the environment. In the past two years, 400,000 acres of California farmland have gone fallow, and now fit the bill.

“My son,” says Rajkovich, “will probably be a solar farmer versus an almond farmer. That’s the future.”

The data drought

Everyone up and down the state, from the coast to the Sierra foothills, agrees: there is no magic bullet for the water shortage, but the state might survive if it can shake off its misguided culture of abundance. People should stop putting water-intensive landscapes in backyards and local parks, and let the ones here now die a noble death. Those manmade green carpets use about 4.165 million acre-feet of water per year - 10% of the state’s water - and provide little in the way of value. Spain, Italy, South Africa, Chile and Israel have all learned to live without ornamental lawns. Californians can, too. “We have to get away from the idea that having a nice lawn is a good thing, and towards the idea that having a nice lawn is a bad thing,” says Gleick. “People’s preferences and behaviours do change over time; look at seatbelts, and smoking. We can change the way society values certain things.”

Technology will play a key role in the move toward efficiency. The state needs to repair or replace its outdated and ageing waterworks. It should also consider scalable ways to improve the efficiency of the system at every node. For example, Sacramento could mandate water-efficient plumbing in all new construction.

“It’s sexier to visit a desal plant than a

“It’s sexier to visit a desal plant than a low-flow toilet, but we’ll get a lot more water at a far lower cost by installing low-flow toilets”

MICHAEL NELSON



Dry season: the fourth year of devastating drought has dried up wells and killed crops

low-flow toilet,” says Gleick, “but we’ll get a lot more water at a far lower cost by installing low-flow toilets.”

California could also save a lot of water if the water decision-makers weren’t working blindfolded. Nearly every policy wonk I spoke with told me that the key to a water-secure future in California is better monitoring and reporting requirements. We need to, at the very least, get up to the standards that other water-poor countries have set.

“I can tell you right now the state of every major [water] storage facility in Australia, in my app on my phone,” says Marcus. Contrast that with California: Sacramento has little idea how water is used in far-flung parts of the state where local water managers act in response to the local needs of their constituents, and not necessarily to their neighbours.

Among the most important missing data is how much water is being diverted from surface waterways (like the California Aqueduct) and groundwater aquifers. “If California knew what Californians know about water, management and policymaking would be much easier,” write authors of a recent Public Policy Institute of California report.

For years, the state didn’t have to; there was always enough water to go around, and when there wasn’t, there was always that eternal California confidence that there would be rain on the way. But, as Hanak says, “we don’t have the luxury any more of getting by with slop in the system”.

The goal of Governor Brown’s executive

order, combined with the Water Supply and Reliability section of last year’s \$7.545bn (€6.97bn) water bond and the 2014 Sustainable Groundwater Management Act, is to end this carelessness. They require improved water use reporting throughout the state and stricter penalties for water misuse and abuse. They also create incentives for efficiency and set aside significant money for investment into water innovation.

There’s no way to predict the effects of all these sticks and carrots on California’s water culture. But there is plenty of Golden State optimism that the state isn’t done for yet. As we drive through Yolo County - where 90% of the country’s canned and processed tomatoes are grown - Marcus is telling me that the current Water Board is ready to get things done. “Some folks call us the dream team. Other folks are probably terrified of us,” she says. “But the bottom line is we’re problem solvers and our driving force is to make decisions. I know perfect is the enemy of the good.” Then she points across my chest and I turn to look out the driver’s side window at what looks to be a newly planted orchard, rows of fruit or nut trees just a foot or two high.

Marcus apologises. “Sorry, I want you to watch the road,” she says, “but I didn’t want you to miss the baby trees.” ■



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WATER WARS **SEVEN STORMS** **ARE BREWING**

From Turkey to Syria, Egypt to Yemen, China to India, the fight to secure and safeguard access to the world's most precious resource is intensifying. The age of the water wars has begun

BY JAMES FERGUSSON





Hellish horizon: Peshmerga troops retake the largest dam in Iraq, across the Tigris at Mosul and vital to Islamic State's water supply

T

he world is at war over water. Goldman Sachs describes it as “the petroleum of the next century”. Disputes over water tend to start small and local - for instance, with the sort of protests that drought-stricken São Paulo has experienced this year. But minor civil unrest can quickly mushroom, as the bonds of civilisation snap.

It is often forgotten that the revolution against Syrian president Bashar al-Assad began this way, when youths of the southern Syrian town of Daraa, angry at the local governor’s corrupt allocation of scarce reservoir water, were caught spraying anti-establishment graffiti. Their arrest and torture was the final straw for the tribes from which the youths came. It was a very similar story in Yemen, whose revolution began in 2011 in Taiz, the most water-stressed city in that country.

When we think of Syria now, we cannot see far past the threat posed by Islamists. But Isis, in the end, is a symptom of social malfunction. If order is to be restored, we might do better to start focusing instead on the causes. Then we could perhaps look harder for “soft power” solutions - the restoration of governance and basic services, such as electricity and water supply - rather than for hard power ones, such as missiles and bombs.

1

THE MESOPOTAMIAN WAR



As Islamic State’s leaders work to carve out their glorious new state, they have comprehended that political power in Mesopotamia has always rested on the ability to supply its citizens with water. The prosperity of ancient Nimrud, the 7th-century BC ruins that Isis

recently bulldozed because they were “unIslamic”, was founded on its irrigation dam across the Tigris. The Sumerian city-state of Ur - the first city, founded in 3800BC - was abandoned by 500BC following a protracted drought and the siltation of the Euphrates.

Isis is headquartered at Raqqa, a mere 40km down the Euphrates from the largest reservoir in Syria, Lake Assad. Raqqa’s economy has long depended on the cultivation of cotton irrigated by the reservoir, which was formed by the Russian-assisted construction of the Tabqa dam in 1973, and designed to irrigate some 2,500 square miles of farmland.

Last August, Isis fought fiercely for control of the largest dam in Iraq, across the Tigris at Mosul. Its fighters also took over two other dams across the Euphrates, one at Fallujah, the other at Haditha. In all cases, it took American air strikes to drive them off, and the high value the terrorist group places on Mesopotamia’s dams suggests that further offensives against such targets are likely.

Even if Isis leaders in Raqqa succeed in holding one of these key pieces of hydro-infrastructure, however, they do not control the headwaters of either the Tigris or the Euphrates, which rise in Turkey. It is the Turks, who have squabbled for 40 years with their downstream neighbours over use of the rivers, who therefore hold the keys to the long-term future of Isis - and the Islamists know it.

2

TURKEY V ISIS



Last summer, Isis accused the Turkish government in Ankara, headed by Recep Tayyip Erdogan, of deliberately holding back the Euphrates through a series of dams on its territory, lowering water levels in Lake Assad by a record six metres. Isis was apoplectic.

“I pray to God that the apostate [Turkish] government reconsiders its decisions,” a spokesman Abu Mosa reportedly said, “because if they do not reconsider it now, we will reconsider it for them by liberating Istanbul.”

Turkey’s dams have given Ankara a vital hold over Isis’s leaders, who, for the present, twitch like puppets on a string. Ankara, it should be said, may not have been wholly responsible for the shrinking of Lake Assad. Local farmers, emboldened by the collapse of governance in Syria, were reported last year to have siphoned off vast amounts of water to irrigate their

own cotton plantations. Nature played a role too; there was less than half as much rainfall in the Turkish highlands in the wet season of 2014 as in the previous year.

Nevertheless, Turkey’s stranglehold over its downstream neighbours is real - and it is set to tighten further in 2015, with the completion of the controversial Ilisu hydro-dam on the Tigris, which will create a 10 billion cubic metre reservoir just 30 miles north of the Syrian border. The dam is the latest of 22 envisioned under the Southeastern Anatolia Project (or GAP, to use its Turkish acronym), a vast regional development plan that was originally mooted by Kemal Ataturk in the 1930s.

The father of modern Turkey could not have foreseen how completely his country’s “blue gold” would one day replace oil as the region’s most important resource. Iraq’s oil industry requires 1.8 billion cubic metres of water a year in order to function at all. Ankara has adopted a canny and forward foreign policy for years now, extending its influence everywhere from Somalia to Afghanistan. What is happening in Anatolia now suggests that “neo-Ottomanism” is not just political posturing: it really is the future for this part of the Middle East.

Hydrologists in Sweden recently suggested that by 2040, the volume of water being extracted from the mighty Tigris and Euphrates - rivers that once delineated and sustained the cradle of civilisation - could be so great that they no longer reach the sea.

Once the GAP is completed, about half of the water these rivers now carry may never leave Turkey at all. The prediction bodes very ill for the visionaries of Islamic State. Whatever else they may achieve, it is no 1,000-year Reich that they are building in Syria or Iraq.

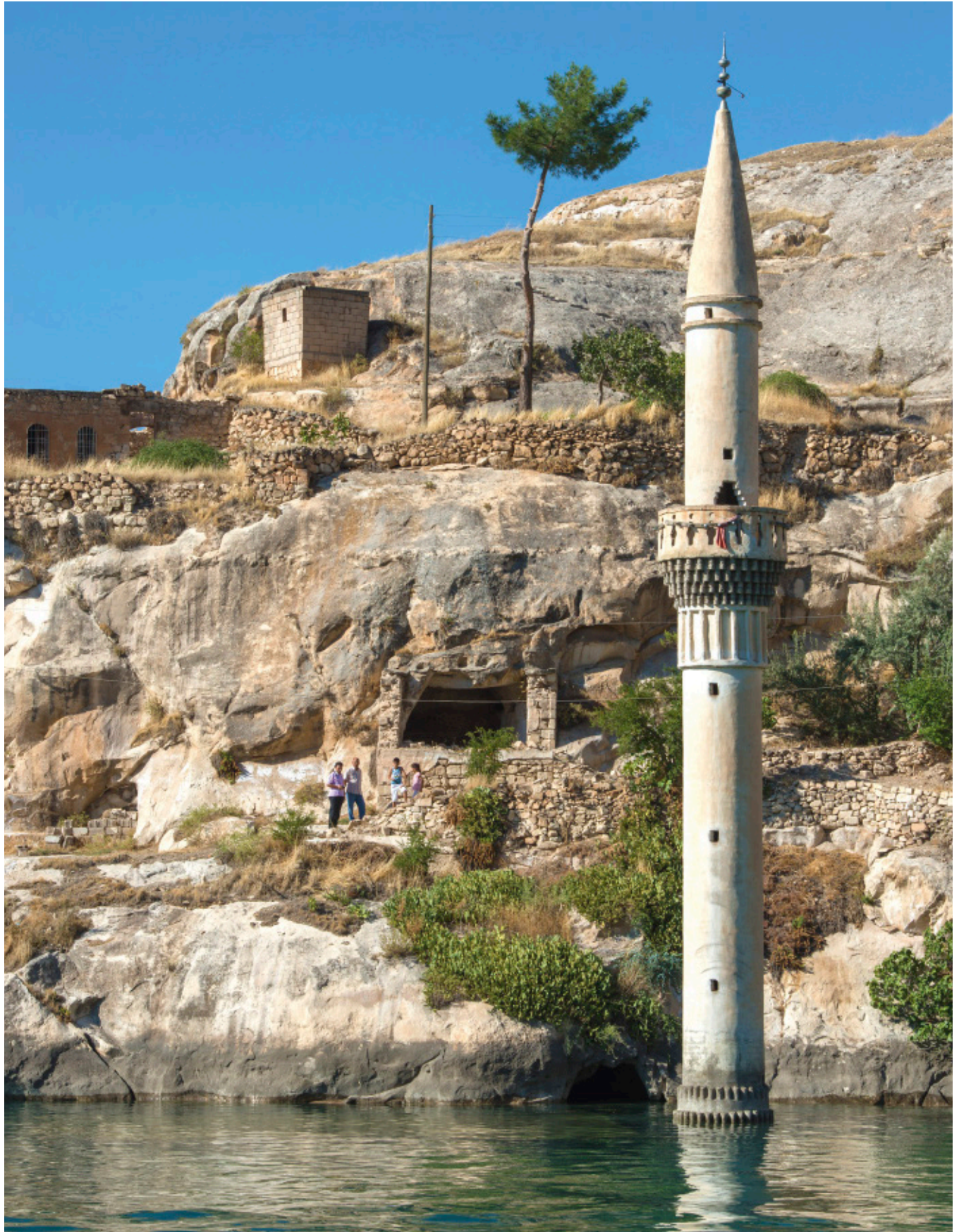
3

THE YANGTZE PROBLEM



There are dozens of potential dam-related flashpoints around the world. The Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague, which handles international water disputes, says 263 river basins are contested globally. There are already more than 40,000 large dams around the world. These icons of post-war Western development irrigate millions of square miles of farmland and produce a fifth of the world’s electricity through hydropower.

An area the size of California - 0.3% of the world’s total land mass - has been lost to artificial reservoirs since the golden age



HEMN BABAN/GETTY

Flashpoint: one of the vital dams on the Euphrates. Isis forces took control and could only be driven off by American air strikes

of dam-building began in the 1950s. The number of major schemes tailed off in the 1990s, as environmental concerns grew and the economic efficiency of the largest projects was called into question. But booming demand has since dramatically revived the industry. New mega-dams are now among the largest and most expensive engineering projects on the planet.

The costliest so far is China's South-to-North Water Diversion Project, a scheme to divert the waters of the River Yangtze via dams, tunnels and three vast canals to the arid north of the country. The project is still only half finished, yet by last year had swallowed more than \$79bn (£73bn). Hundreds of thousands of villagers have been forced from their homes by the project. The scheme's long-term effect on the environment and economy of the south remains uncertain.

Far to the south, meanwhile, on the River Mekong, Laos is copying China by building two major dams that could devastate not just the local economies but the lives of its downstream neighbours, Cambodia and Vietnam. The diet of some 50 million people is based on fish caught in the Mekong, which is already the most dammed river in the world.

Then there is the Rogun hydro-dam on the Amu Darya in Tajikistan which, when completed, could be 355 metres high: the tallest dam in the world. The possible effect on the Amu Darya worries downstream Uzbekistan, which has responded with sanctions and travel restrictions on the Tajiks.

4

THE CONGO AND THE NILE



The most productive hydro-power dam, the Grand Inga, has recently been proposed for the River Congo, 225km south-west of Kinshasa.

With a projected price tag of £80bn (£74bn), developers claim it will "light up Africa". Critics say that the electricity generated will mostly be transmitted to distant cities, and that the continent's poorest will see little benefit. The cost overruns in this notoriously corrupt part of the world could also end up making the South-to-North China project look cheap.

This month, Egypt and Ethiopia signed a treaty over the latter's half-built Grand Renaissance dam on the Blue Nile, which will be the largest hydro-scheme in Africa when it comes on stream in 2017. Downstream Egypt, whose development has depended on the Nile since ancient

times, originally objected so strongly that in June 2013 a meeting of the cabinet of the then president, Mohammad Morsi, was caught on live television discussing ways of destroying the dam, including via covert support for anti-government rebels. Sanity seems now to have prevailed.

5

AFGHANISTAN DRIES UP



Nato's recently concluded engagement in southern Afghanistan is not normally cast as a water conflict, although that is largely what it was. Helmand, the most hotly-disputed province, was once one of Afghanistan's breadbaskets thanks to the Helmand Valley Authority, an irrigation scheme set up in the 1950s by American engineers.

But mismanagement of the scheme's 300 miles of canals, coupled with a period of protracted drought, meant that the area of irrigated land halved between 1979 and 2002. Local tribes, spurred on by the vast profits to be made from the cultivation of poppies, fought over what remained, with the Taliban exploiting the conflict.

One of the centrepieces of the HVA was the Kajaki hydro-dam, completed in 1953 by the same US firm that built the Hoover Dam on the River Colorado. The Americans returned in 2001, this time in order to bomb it.

Policy changed again in 2006, however, when Nato realised how important the dam was to regional stability. In 2008, in what proved to be the largest set-piece Nato operation of the entire Afghan war, some 5,000 Nato troops fought for six days to deliver by road a new 200-ton turbine to the plant. Seven years on, the turbine, scandalously, has still not been assembled.

6

INDIA V PAKISTAN



The territorial dispute between India and Pakistan over Kashmir - both the highest and longest-running in the world - is largely about control of the headwaters of

the River Indus, on which Pakistan's agricultural economy downstream has become ever more dependent.

There are 200 million people in Pakistan: double the number 30 years ago. Yet Dutch scientists think shrinking glaciers

caused by climate change could reduce the Indus by 8% by 2050.

India, which has built or proposed some 45 hydro-schemes on the Indus's upper reaches, insists that flow will never be affected. But Pakistan is as paranoid about India as Isis is about Turkey, with a long track-record of blaming India for social ills at home.

The rhetoric of extremists is already hot. Hafiz Saeed, a militant linked to the Mumbai hotel atrocity of 2008, has spoken in the past of India's "water terrorism", and campaigned under slogans like "Water flows, or blood". Could diminishing water supply push these nuclear-armed neighbours towards a new war?

7

ISRAEL V PALESTINE



Finally, there is Israel and Palestine, arguably the grand-daddy of all water conflicts. Israel, a state founded on Ben-Gurion's dream of "making the desert bloom", diverted the River Jordan half a century ago, east and southwards towards the Negev desert, via a canal called the National Water Carrier.

The Dead Sea has lost a third of its surface area as a direct consequence, and the River Jordan of biblical antiquity has become a muddy trickle in a ditch. The reason Israel still occupies the Golan Heights, captured from Syria in the Six-Day War of 1967, is because that is where the Jordan rises.

All this has come at the expense of the Palestinians, who accuse Israel of manipulating water supply to suppress them. Some 85% of all the water in the West Bank goes to Israel, according to some estimates. The Palestinian Water Authority says that Israelis consume seven times more water, per capita, than Palestinians: a spur, if ever there was one, for a resumption of the Intifada.

Elsewhere in the world, even the hottest conflicts over water supply have been resolved through negotiation. But with the recent re-election of Benjamin Netanyahu, who campaigned on the outright rejection of a two-state solution to the region's troubles, the prospect of a fairer water-sharing arrangement for Palestine look more remote than ever. ■

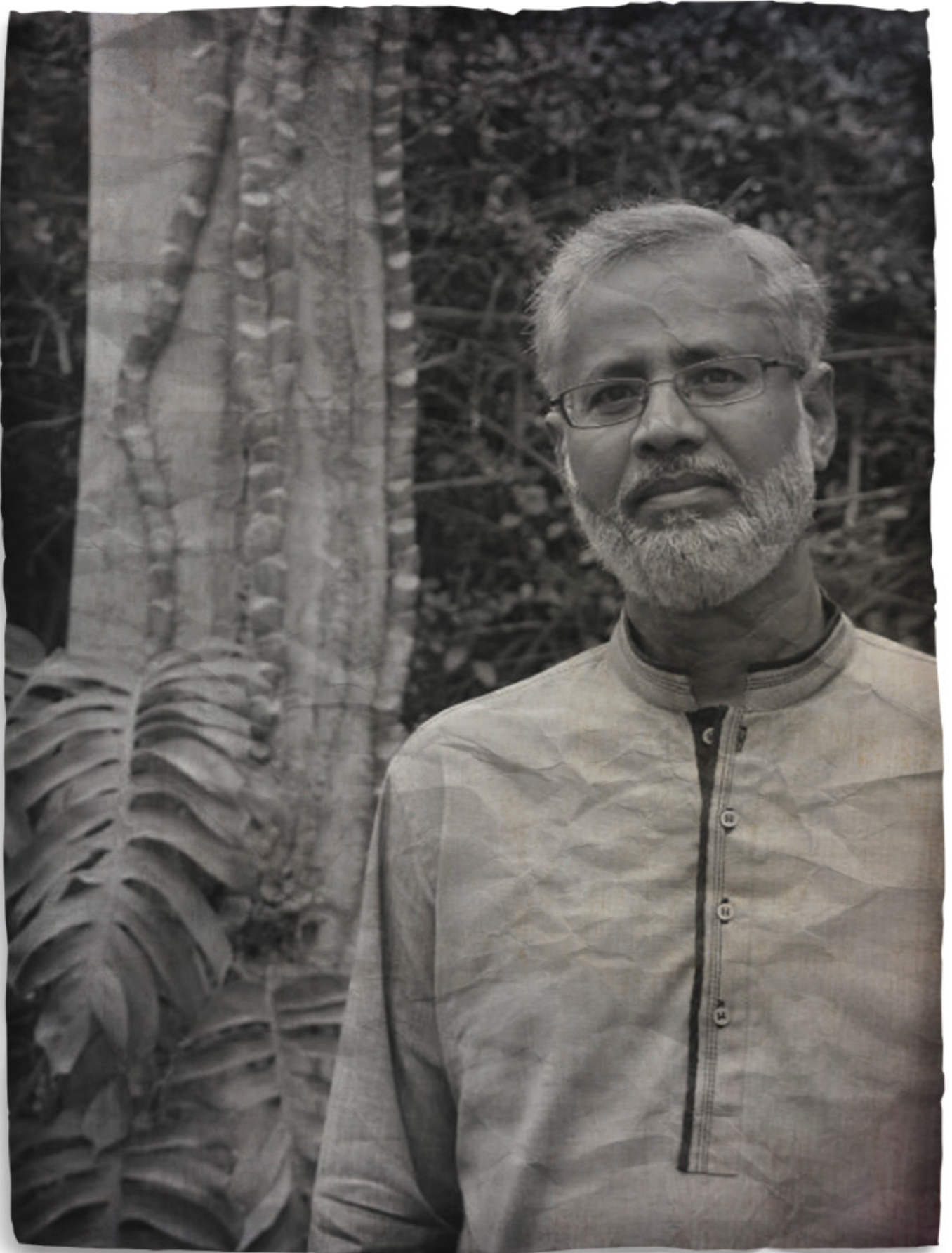


James Fergusson holds a masters degree in hydrogeology. He has written on the water crisis in Yemen for Newsweek. [@jferg66](#)



CHINA/PHOTO PRESS/GETTY

Looming large: the Three Gorges Dam project in Yichang, above, is the world's largest hydropower project



Martyred mentor: the professor was killed just as his academic successes promised him a place on the wider stage of Pakistani politics

MURDER OF THE ACADEMICS

Shakeel Auj was a moderate man. The dean of Islamic studies at Karachi University even argued women should be allowed to marry outside Islam. But his views made him a target. Last September, he was shot in the head by an unknown gunman on a motorbike, one of more than 20 academics to be murdered in the past five years

**ALEX PRESTON REPORTS
FROM KARACHI**

S

uddenly, I felt something wrong had happened to my beloved shaheed mentor.” Dr Amna Afreen was squeezed into the back seat of a Toyota Probox station-wagon, travelling at speed down the Nipa Overpass on Karachi’s bustling University Road when the gunman opened fire.

“I was about to enquire when I saw the left-eye glass of his spectacles breaking. In a moment a bullet came out and went through the windscreen. Immediately, as an unconscious act, I stooped down and bent over Sir’s niece who was sitting between us and I covered her. Another bullet was fired. Perhaps in a fit of emotion I did not realise that it went through my right shoulder. I was screaming, crying and saying that they killed Sir.”

It was a little after 10am on 18 September last year when the assassin, riding pillion on a motorbike, fired two shots into the Toyota’s tinted rear window. In the ensuing confusion, the motorbike roared off, the

car accelerated, the four occupants of the car’s back seat felt the world pitch irrevocably. All of them, that is, except for the white-bearded, bespectacled Professor Shakeel Auj, sitting in the middle, who had been shot through the head.

“I have lost a very close friend who was the most caring and kind person I know,” said Afreen, who was one of Auj’s research assistants and had completed her PhD under his supervision. “He was my ideal and my source of inspiration.” They rushed Auj to the Aga Khan University Hospital, 15 minutes away at the other end of University Road, trying to staunch the blood flowing fast from the back of his head and from his eye at the front. By the time they pulled up outside the hospital, Auj was dead.

Afreen had been due to give a speech about her teacher at the Iranian Embassy that morning, accompanied by a fellow academic, Tahir Masood, and Auj’s niece, the eight-year-old Asra. The ceremony honouring Auj was the latest in a series of accolades in a year of success for the 54-year-old professor. He was the coming man at Karachi University: dean of the Faculty of Islamic Studies, a regular commentator on religious matters in the media, he had just been awarded the highly coveted Tamgha-e-Imtiaz, a medal conferred by the government for outstanding service to the state.

Auj was close to the President of Pakistan, Mamnoon Hussain, who had read several of his books and saw him as a valuable moderate voice in a country of rigidly held religious views. He was being considered for the role of chairman of the influential Islamic Ideological Council for 2015. He was killed just as his academic successes promised him a place on the wider stage of Pakistani politics.

‘Curses be upon him’

The initial reaction to the assassination was outrage. Karachi University shut for three days of mourning. There were protests by students on campus, lamentations in the local press. Yet the targeting of university professors in the country is commonplace (it is a sign of the unusual esteem in which Auj was held that his death attracted so much opprobrium).

A week before Auj’s murder, one of his colleagues, Maulana Masood Baig, a visiting lecturer in the Department for Islamic Studies, was shot as he went to pick up his children from school. In February 2014, KU’s dean of medicine, Dr Jawaaid Iqbal Qazi, was assassinated, allegedly for refusing to bow to pressure to accept politically connected dental students. Dr Rubina Khalid, a lecturer in radiology at Karachi’s Dow Medical University, was killed at the end of November, just a few days after a Professor Khalid Khan was assassinated in Islamabad. None of these murders has been solved.

Auj’s case obsessed me in the weeks leading up to my trip to Pakistan. It was not only that his death seemed so exemplary and so tragic – a moderate man mown down, or so it seemed, for speaking out against the hijacking of Islam by a mob of violent and sclerotic mullahs. It was also the figure of Auj’s eldest son, 28-year-old Dr Hassan Khan, who had mounted a Facebook campaign to unmask his father’s killers that grew more desperate in tone with every passing week.

Hassan posted pictures of himself with his father, the silvered older man pressing a whiskery cheek against his son’s. He uploaded late-night philippics in immaculate English demanding action from the police, from the security services, from the university authorities, pointing out the numerous flaws in news reports of his father’s assassination. His was a lone, helpless, heartbroken voice, calling out for justice, for vengeance, for his father.

I read everything I could about Auj’s murder in the weeks leading up to my visit to Pakistan: articles in *Dawn* and *Tribune*, Pakistani newspapers, forums on Siasat.com, a local website, comments on Hassan’s Facebook page. All seemed to point to a religious angle to the assassination, with one anonymous Siasat user summing up the general tone: “Pakistan is a very dangerous place for anyone who dare to speak his/her mind.” In 2012, Auj was the subject of a fatwa purportedly issued by Mufti Rafi Usmani, the head of the Darul ‘Uloom mosque and madrasa in Karachi’s eastern district of Landhi. The fatwa, which the cleric later denied, accused Auj of blasphemy, calling him “*wajibul qatl*” (liable to be killed) and was circulated via text messages and over



Seeking justice: Shakeel's son Hassan, left, mounted a web campaign to unmask his father's killers

the internet. One message read: "The blasphemer of the Prophet and Quran, Dr Shakeel, curses be upon him, deserves only one punishment - beheading."

Auj was alleged to have given a speech in the US in which he argued that Muslim women ought - like their menfolk - to be allowed to marry outside their faith. In fact, he had made the remark in one of his books, *Nisaayiaat*: "When Islam can clearly and happily accept in non-Muslim women for Muslim men, especially when women are the first teachers of their children, then why can Islam not accept non-Muslim men for Muslim women? Of course it should, and it will." Auj was moderate, a reformer, and for many this made him a target and explained his assassination.

Then, on 28 January, the Inspector General of Sindh Police, Ghulam Qadir Thebo, announced the arrest of Auj's suspected killer - Mohammed Mansoor, a hospital porter from the Liaquatabad district of the city. While under investigation for a different crime - a drive-by shooting on a Rangers station (the Rangers are a paramilitary police force) - Mansoor, after interrogation, confessed both to the murder of Auj and to the 2013

killing of another professor, the poet Syed Sibte Jafar. He was known to the authorities as a member of the Muttahida Qaumi Movement (MQM).

MQM is designated a terrorist organisation by several governments, while its leader, Altaf Hussein, lives in exile in Edgware, north London. In 2009, when Prime Minister Pervez Musharraf initiated a reconciliation programme, 31 cases of murder in which Hussein was the accused were dropped. Auj's killing, having seemed initially the work of religious fundamentalists, had taken on a new, political angle.

Yellow moon

Against this background I come to Pakistan to speak at the Karachi Literary Festival, which welcomes 125,000 visitors to a heavily-guarded compound in the grounds of the Beach Luxury Hotel every year. During my time at the festival, I talk to a number of my fellow authors about Auj's murder - Kamila Shamsie, HM Naqvi, Aakar Patel. All are as baffled, and as fascinated, as I: the case is as troubling and tortuous as any literary thriller.

When I collar Mohammed Hanif - author

of *A Case of Exploding Mangoes* - outside a party at 2am, keen to get his take on the mystery of Auj's death, he lets me know politely, but firmly, that I should direct my interest elsewhere: it isn't a good idea to go poking my nose into murder cases where the likes of MQM and other extremist organisations are involved.

The next night I hail a taxi and make my way to Karachi University in the north-east of the city, heading towards one of the back entrances, past a Rangers checkpoint where guards in khaki camouflage swing their AK47s lazily as we pass. I've been told not to leave the hotel compound without an armed guard and armoured car, but it is a balmy evening and Karachi seems anything but threatening under the glow of a yellow moon.

I meet my fixer (a recent KU graduate who has asked for his name to be removed from this piece, fearing reprisals) outside a row of student shops on campus. We wend our way through a scrubby park to a row of university houses and stop in front of one of them - three stucco stories, red stripes painted on white latticework, a decent square of garden.

This was Auj's home.

Pakistan's murdered professors

APRIL 2010

† **Prof Nalima Talib**
Professor of Mass Communications at Balochistan University. Gunned down in Quetta

AUGUST 2010

† **Prof Dr Najam al-Hasan**
Assistant Professor of Science, Dow University. Gunned down in Karachi

MARCH 2013

† **Prof Asad Usman**
Assistant Professor of Medicine in Abbasi Shaheed Hospital. Gunned down in Karachi

MARCH 2013

† **Prof Sibte Jaffar**
Principal of Government Degree College, Qasimabad. Gunned down in Karachi

MAY 2013

† **Prof Syed Azfar Rizvi**
Head of the Dhaka

Group of Educational Institutions Gunned down in Karachi

FEBRUARY 2014

† **Dr Javed Iqbal Qazi**
Dean of Medicine at Karachi University. Gunned down in Karachi

FEBRUARY 2014

† **Professor Taqi Hadi Naqvi**
JDC Education Board. Gunned down in Karachi

APRIL 2014

† **Prof Saifuddin Jafri**
Professor of Engineering at Government College of Technology Gunned down in Karachi

APRIL 2014

† **Prof Dr Haider Raza Rizvi**
Professor of Medicine at Darul Sehat. Gunned down in Karachi

JUNE 2014

† **Prof Saba Dashtiyari**

Lecturer, Department of Islamic Studies, Baluchistan University. Gunned down in Quetta

NOVEMBER 2014

† **Prof Khalid Khan**,
Professor of German at the National University of Modern Languages. Gunned down in Islamabad

NOVEMBER 2014

† **Dr Rubina Khalid**
Professor of Medicine at Dow University. Gunned down in Karachi

Also killed in the past five years, many slain in Karachi: Prof Azhar Zaidi, Prof Shamim Khan, Prof Syed Taqi Hadi, Prof Javed Qazi, Prof Anis Anwar, Prof Fahim Raza, Prof Syed Zaigham Abbas, Prof Muhammad Abbas, Prof Asghar Hussain Zaidi, Prof Mahtab Alam, Prof Salman Ali



Heavy toll: academics killed from 2010 onward include (clockwise from left) Haider Raza Rizvi, Syed Azfar Rizvi, Asad Usman, Sibte Jaffar and Javed Iqbal Qazi

'Here, I'm giving you dots'

The front door is answered by Hassan, Auj's son. Wire-thin, he stoops a little as he shows us into the drawing room where his youngest brother, Yamman, 23, sits. Yamman is handsome, sardonic, confident. Both are at the university: Hassan working in the medical centre, Yamman preparing for postgraduate study in business while also teaching on KU's MBA programme.

On the wall above Hassan's head I see a plaque with a picture of Auj, the sickle moon and star of the Pakistani flag. "It was for his Tamgha-e-Imtiaz," Yamman tells me. Auj had another son, Malhan, who comes and sits silent, ghostly, beside his brothers. Auj's wife is upstairs, observing the ritual of idda by which a widow must not meet men outside her immediate family for the duration of her period of mourning.

Yamman sits back and watches as we speak. He cuts his older brother off mid-sentence several times, seeming to want to hold him back from revealing too much. I ask them whether they're happy that their father's killer has been caught. Hassan tuts and shakes his head.

"Mansoor was not the murderer. He was the recce man. Someone gave him a task to keep an eye on the police and Rangers. He did two rounds on a bike and said that there were no police or Rangers about. So what the police are claiming as a huge victory is nothing. I had a meeting with the police and I told them that he was a very minor player. I just want the mastermind." Hassan leans forward: "My father was not a political man."

If it wasn't MQM, then who was it? Hassan pauses, steeples his fingers, and gives what feels like a carefully prepared speech. "My father was murdered for one of three reasons: because of politics; because of his moderate religious views; because of internal pressures at KU. I completely rule out the political explanation. Religion is a possibility: religious attacks came from below, from the students, and from around him, from his colleagues. In terms of the pressures at KU, he was a person of merit who never tolerated anyone who plagiarised articles. This is a huge problem in Pakistani universities, a very common thing. There's so much cheating and bribery going on."

Hassan carries on. "Many people thought he would be the next Vice-Chancellor of KU. If he had been Vice-Chancellor," he says, "he would have been able to stop these problems at a higher level. He was dean, he was stopping those things at a level of the Department of Islamic Studies. If he'd been Vice Chancellor ..." He wags a finger at me. "Here I'm giving you the dots and you only have to join them. My father repeatedly made written complaints to the current

"We were amazed by the way he was killed. Our thinking was that he must be a sniper or marksman, or it was an inside job"

Vice-Chancellor about plagiarism, about his fellow members of staff cheating or helping students to cheat. And he received threatening calls, SMSes. He was threatened time and again. My father kept shouting that people were trying to kill him. And finally it happened."

Yamman nods. "As soon as he became a dean, the trouble started. My father's greatest problem was that he was unbuyable. In this country, if you want to control someone, you don't have to kill them. You just find out what their weakness is, you bribe or you blackmail."

In 2012 Auj filed a police report against his predecessor as dean of Islamic Studies, Dr Abdul Rashid, who was briefly arrested and then released. A student, Sami-uz-Zamaan, had sent threatening SMS messages to Shakeel Auj and disseminated the fatwa calling for his murder. He told the police he had been ordered to do so by Dr Rashid. When Auj was murdered, Rashid was arrested again, and questioned alongside another colleague from the Faculty of Islamic Studies, Dr Nasir Akhtar. Both professors are members of the hardline Deobandi sect, a school of thought held by the majority of the leadership and foot soldiers of the Taliban. No charges were pressed against either of them.



Targeted: an allegedly fake fatwa against Auj

As we move into the small hours of the morning, I feel I'm missing some central point, as if my distance from the culture, from the particularities of Karachi life, is blinding me to something obvious that the brothers are trying to tell me. The brothers begin to accuse others, making veiled allusions to the security services and gnomic pronouncements about banned religious movements.

I ask whether they think Islami Jamiat Talaba (IJT), the flourishing student fundamentalist movement, was involved in their father's death. "I won't label them," Hassan says, shaking his head. "All I will say is that the killers are far beyond IJT, much more radical. These are things that I just can't talk about."

I push him and he backs off. "Think about it. There were four people sitting in the back of the car but they knew where he was. They knew the particular location of the vehicle, they knew where he was sitting, they knew his height, where his head would be. They got him in the back of his head. The killer knew he was done after two shots. He could have fired more, but he knew he didn't need to. It was a moving-target-to-moving-target assassination. A difficult shot. Even a police marksman I spoke to told me he couldn't have made such a shot. Think about who could have made a hit like this."

We leave and walk out into the cool night air, the boys waving us off, looking very young and rather lost as they stand in front of the large white house. Beside the park, we run into two professors taking a post-dinner stroll. One of them, Dr Qadri, I recognise from a television debate in which he'd appeared alongside Shakeel Auj. "It is very sad, he was my neighbour, he was a good friend," Dr Qadri tells me. He invites me to come and visit him on campus which I do, the following week.

In his office Dr Qadri is friendly until he hears I'm a journalist writing about the assassination of Auj. "I didn't know him well," he says, contradicting his words of a few nights earlier. "Since investigations are going on and university agencies are involved in this, I would advise you to speak to the Vice Chancellor. I know nothing more than that."

The Vice Chancellor, Muhammed Quaiser, turns down a request for a meeting and does not respond to emails. I continue to hold on to Hassan's initial presentation of the case - that it was either political, religious, or professional, and do my best to work from there.

While I'm in Karachi, there are further breakthroughs. The police finally admit Mohammed Mansoor was only a bit-part player, although he continues to be held in custody for other crimes, and that they are looking for two other men, Fahim



Mean streets: In Karachi, targeted killings are common and the fear of Islamist extremists, glorified in roadside graffiti above, is intensifying

Jabalpuri and Ehtasham, hired killers and members of MQM.

Sniper, marksman, inside job

There are other discoveries: that a group of students led a campaign against Auj in the wake of the blasphemy accusation in 2012, accusing him of “humiliat[ing] the Prophet Mohammed”. And that his sons’ claims that their father was on his way to being Vice Chancellor of KU were wide of the mark. The position is entirely political, granted to his favourites by the Governor of Sindh. Since 2002, the Governor has been Ishrat-ul-Ebad Khan, an MQM man. One of the KU faculty members described the idea of Khan nominating Shakeel Auj as “preposterous”.

I arrange a meeting with the Inspector General of Police in Sindh to try to untangle what the motive for Auj’s killing could have

been. Behind a high wall topped with barbed wire, through a vast chicané of concrete blocks, Qadir Thebo sits in his grand office – a genial, soldierly man resting his elbows on a large leather-topped desk.

“We were amazed at the way he was killed,” he says. “Our thinking was then that he must either be a sniper or marksman, or it was an inside job. That they were provided with information from Karachi University.” He confirms the early arrest of Auj’s fellow professor, Dr Abdul Rashid. “But we could find no proof. We don’t think he was directly involved.

“There is so much corruption in Karachi University,” he says. “There are professors cheating, lying, it’s a bad place. There is a lot of political influence among the professors. KU is under the control of the Governor. This is important. And the

Governor is MQM. So we have discounted the religious angle and we believe now that there was a political motive.”

Mohammed Mansoor’s confession was convenient for the police: they had been under pressure over the spate of professional Karachiites – including lawyers and doctors as well as university professors – being murdered. The confession came only after a lengthy interrogation. The IG complained of the difficulty he has in securing convictions for the suspects he arrests:

“It is the greatest frustration to arrest culprits while knowing that they won’t be brought to justice.” But, in Pakistan, the judiciary protest the sometimes brutal methods by which the police extract information.

Qadir Thebo, and hence the police force as a whole, is affiliated with the PPP, the

strongest political party in Sindh and sworn enemies of MQM.

After a long period in which the police – along with everyone else in the city – lived in fear of MQM, Qadir Thebo has made his name by taking them on. The IG Police has a distinct interest in Auj's murder being the work of his fiercest foes, and in being seen to be bringing them to justice.

Fatwa by email

Dr Abdul Rashid is also keen to claim a political motive for Auj's killing. We agree to meet at his office on the KU campus. Though he retired from the university in the wake of Auj's death, moving down the road to the Federal Urdu University, he has been allowed to keep an airy first-floor room in the Department of Arabic.

In the car on the way to see him, I check my emails to find several from a Yahoo address I don't recognise. One of them contains a copy, in Urdu and then in English, of a letter written by Shakeel Auj to the Vice Chancellor, Quaiser.

It reads: "A fatwa is being circulated to all against me, in which it is written that I am (GOD forbid) expelled from Islam and an infidel ... This fatwa is being circulated by some teachers of my faculty. Sir, this horrible and dangerous language shows that my enemies want to kill me or get me killed. I want to request you to provide me adequate security and also inform interior ministry office so that adequate measures can be taken. I hope you will listen to my plea, and will take appropriate action."

Dr Abdul Rashid ushers me into his office, dominated by a broad billboard advertising the PhD students he has supervised over the years. He is a big, bear-like man, a sprawl of white beard, deep-set eyes. I begin by asking him about the tensions I'd heard about on the campus between the increasingly marginalised moderate students and their fundamentalist peers.

"There are no problems," he says. "It is a peaceful university. It is the media that overstates things." He admits to me that he was a member of IJT when he was at KU and that he continues to support Jamaat-e-Islam. He grew up studying in the madrassas, he is a conservative, he says.

It is only when I mention the name of Shakeel Auj that the atmosphere in the room turns suddenly icy. "It was a political murder," he tells me, the deep eyes flashing. "I have nothing more to say about it."

It is clear that the interview is over and he shows me awkwardly to the door. I follow up a few days later over email and, back in the UK, receive a reply. "Regarding the Shakeel Auj murder, the police report is clear and sufficient and now when the killer of Auj has already been identified by police, the chapter must be closed."

Karachi University

Gunfights and brawls on campus

With more than 80,000 students, the University of Karachi, often known as KU, is Pakistan's largest university and among its best-regarded. Situated in the open eastern suburbs of the city, it was established by Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan shortly after the founding of Pakistan. It is known particularly for its teaching in Political Science and its Institute of Business Administration.

KU's history has not been an easy one, with regular rioting and on-campus violence between warring political factions, all of whom seek to stamp their seal on the upwardly mobile young Pakistanis who pass through the university.

Tensions in Pakistan find themselves expressed in microcosm on the campus of KU. The 1970s saw "Language Riots" between local Sindhi students and the incoming Mohajirs, immigrants from India, which split students and faculty. In the mid-1980s, there was a series of violent riots on campus after the murder of a student, Bushra Zaidi, with buses set ablaze and tear gas deployed by police.

Since 1989, the university has had a Rangers barracks within the campus – a paramilitary police force aimed at curbing the outbreaks of campus violence, as well as cracking down on the presence of Taliban and al-Qaida-linked cells within the university. 2011 was another bloody year for the university, with regular clashes between political groups closing the university several times, with a series of curfews imposed by Rangers in an effort to assert control.

Nadeem Paracha, one of Pakistan's leading journalists and columnist for *Dawn*, as well as a KU graduate, explains that Karachi University had seen a sharp rise in the number of students embracing movements like Islami Jamiat Talaba in the post-9/11 years. "It's universal and it has been happening across the Muslim world. The roots of radicalisation were always middle class.

"KU was a hotbed of progressive politics until the mid-1970s, when it fell into the pocket of conservative forces, principally IJT. In those days, a large number of students from the countryside, from tribal areas, came to KU. They couldn't relate to the progressive politics because they came from socially conservative backgrounds. So IJT were really smart. They told them that what they had in common with the others on their campus was religion. They gave them books, organised study groups, gradually brought them round to IJT.

"Finally," he says, "there was the government of General Zia, who in the 1980s banned student political movements, as a threat to his dictatorship. Islami Jamiat Talaba was allowed to continue because its mother party, the Jamaat-e-Islam, was supporting the regime. They had an organisation called the Thunder Squad whose job was to beat up Left-wing student groups, disrupting their festivals. They used to get into gun fights, huge brawls.

"So middle-class radicalisation is not a new thing, but has it increased since 9/11? Certainly."



Funeral rites: in death, Auj has become a cause célèbre for liberal Pakistan

Mental torture

Auj's son Hassan stays in touch on my return to the UK; we exchange lengthy Facebook messages, chatting long into the London night. Most mornings in the weeks following my trip to Karachi there are also a series of emails from the Yahoo account. One of them draws my attention to an inconsistency in the police report of Auj's murder.

I track down the number of Dr Jamil Bandhani and call him. Press and police reports claim he was in the car at the time of Auj's death (in the passenger seat, hence the four people squeezed on the back seat). He wasn't. Bandhani is a colleague of Rashid at the Federal Urdu University. I ask him about Auj's murder. "It was my car I send for Shakeel Auj," he says. "He was my teacher at Karachi University. I send my car, my driver, to collect him at Karachi University, then he come to collect me at Federal Urdu University."

The place where Auj was killed, the Nipa Overpass, is just over a kilometre from the Federal Urdu University gates. I ask Bandhani whether he had any involvement in the killing, whether perhaps he told someone where the car was going to be and when. It seems strange, I add, that the killer knew so precisely where Auj would be sitting. "No. I have nothing to do with this. I tell no one," he says.

We come on to discuss Dr Abdul Rashid. My lawyers won't let me reproduce Bandhani's allegations, but Rashid's name comes up so regularly, so conveniently, I wonder if somebody might be trying to frame him for Auj's murder.

Following this conversation, another email comes through, titled "IMPORTANT". The body of the message is empty, but there are 11 attachments, all of them scans, some in Urdu with English translations appended. All carry claims of one sort or another linking Dr Rashid to KU's various scams (apart from one, which details the story of Rashid biting the hand of a fellow member of staff in the late 90s).

The most damning is a letter, in English, dated 2013 and written to the Vice Chancellor by a student of Rashid. It accuses him of bullying and "mental torture". It also complains that, although the PhD was begun in 2000, it is yet to be awarded because the student refuses to pay Dr Rashid "sums of money" or to "do his personal chores". The letter was written by a student, her cellphone beneath her signature.

I call the number. The moment I mention Shakeel Auj's name, the student, who we'll call Huma, begins to sob. "Please leave me alone," she shouts. "Why won't you people leave me alone? I want nothing to do with this." It's not the first time I've encountered this kind of response. The

"We appeal to the administration that this characterless, villainous and evil-eyed man should be kept away from our pious department"

fear following Auj's killing is pervasive - enough to have convinced Amna Afreen to move to the US soon after the murder and to have persuaded two of Auj's students who had been initially helpful to break off all contact with me.

Several hours later, Huma calls back. "I'm sorry for my reaction," she says. "You are with Scotland Yard, I presume." Her voice is still trembling at the edges, her English poised and careful. She tells me about her friendship with Shakeel Auj, about how scared she now is. I do my best to persuade her that I'm not a detective, but she breezes over me. "You're doing your duty, now I must do mine. I was very frightened when I first heard from you, but the truth needs to be told."

For the next half-hour, Huma speaks to me about the death of Shakeel Auj. Her tone, initially careful, becomes more and more frenetic, her allegations against Dr Rashid, at first credible, spiral out into the speculative and ludicrous. She is in hiding, she tells me. "I'm frightened, of course I am. I'm not in Karachi, I'm not stupid," she says. "I have kids, I'm a single mother, I have to take care of myself."

As soon as I get off the phone with Huma, I type up our conversation and send it to Hassan. I wait impatiently for his response, figuring that - looking past the nuttiness - Huma was a genuine lead, a student of Rashid who appeared to have intimate knowledge of the animus her teacher bore towards Auj. Hassan's response, when it comes, is underwhelming.

"I've seen all this before," he writes, "just after father's murder. Different people coming with different stories, everyone trying to use my father's name to settle their own scores. I've spoken to Yamman about this - we are both dubious."

Beyond the intrigue, the hysteria, the mess of claims and counter-claims surrounding the death of a leading reformer and academic remains the clear image of a precise assassination and an enduring mystery. Whether the motive for his death was political, religious or professional is still unclear.

Shakeel Auj may not have been a political

man, but those he came up against had political links. An MQM worker scouted the area before Auj was assassinated. While the police might have had an interest in the killers being MQM-affiliated, this doesn't mean they weren't.

Auj had been the subject of a fatwa. He was known for promoting people within his department regardless of their sect. He was on his way to receive honours at the Iranian Cultural Centre, perhaps confirming rumours that he was sympathetic towards Shias. It's hard to read the final lines of the letter written by Auj's students - apparently with the help of Rashid's colleague Dr Nasir Akhtar - without a shudder: "We appeal to the administration that this characterless, villainous and evil-eyed man should be kept away from our pious department, otherwise we will boycott the classes, will invite the media and protest, and we will beat this person out of our department."

There were many who would have wanted to stop Auj's upward trajectory at the university, not on the grounds of his religious liberalism but because of his stance against plagiarism and academic corruption. It has now been more than six months that I've been following the story of Shakeel Auj. Hassan's Facebook campaign has barely abated; he looks thinner and more drawn than ever. The emails still come in irregular bursts from the Yahoo account. To one is appended the English translation of another letter from Auj to Vice Chancellor Quaiser, this one dated March 2014 and protesting the appointment of a certain Dr Noor Ahmed Shahtaz as head of KU's Sheikh Zayed Islamic Research Centre, accusing him of financial corruption and of faking his degree. Every day seems to bring a new academic with an interest in getting Auj out of the way.

Shakeel Auj lived in a country where people are routinely murdered for much less than his "blasphemy" or his campaigning. It is likely that his murder will be listed, along with so many others, as unsolved. Hassan and I chat every few days on Facebook, picking over the evidence. I message him one evening, asking how he's holding up.

"I'm good, but numb," he writes back. "I keep staring at the facts of the case, keep thinking that I will suddenly get the meaning, understand who killed him. I pray that when your article comes out, it will make some noise, make the government look into the death of my father properly. It is my last hope." ■



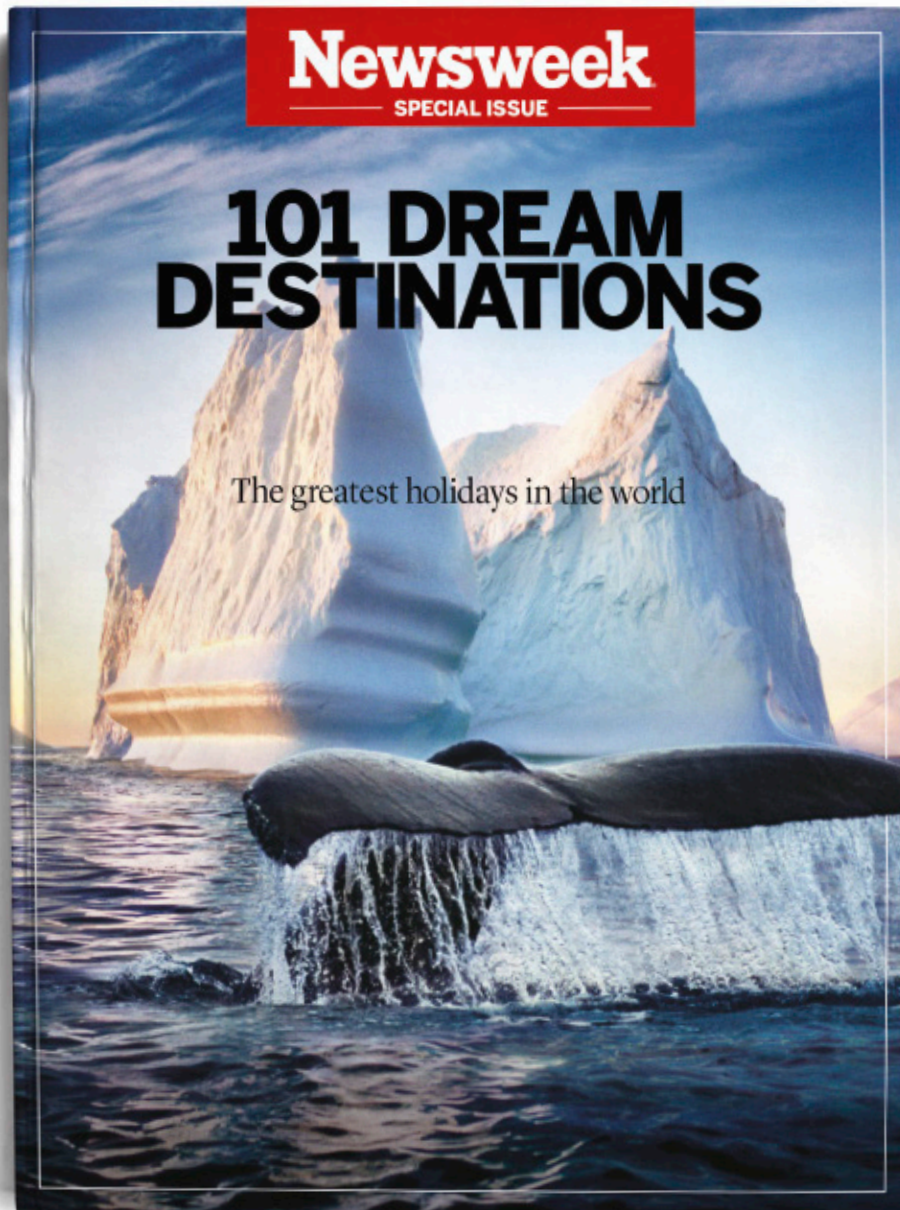
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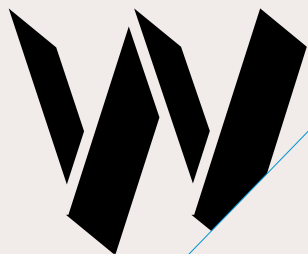
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WEEKEND

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RAW BEAUTY IN AN ANCIENT LAND

Aboriginal paintings are not just art, they are maps, and in their dots and circles lie the contours of Australia's soul



In 1770, a ship called The Endeavour made land in a lovely cove not yet called

Botany Bay, observed by Gweagal men. Spears were waved on one side; shots fired on the other. An Aboriginal man was wounded. When the arrivals picked up the fleeing men's belongings, they found not weapons but fishing equipment. And so began the history of white Australia, soon to be spattered with such tragic communication failures like bloodstains on a beach.

Some of the artefacts retrieved by the first explorers found their way to the British Museum and are now on show in a landmark exhibition, *Indigenous Australia: fragile, beautifully worked spearheads and painted shields that would have scotched the idea of ignorant savages scraping a living off indifferent land, for those who had eyes to see.*

Today, 250 years after that first landing, Aboriginal art is still not widely understood by Westerners visually schooled in the Renaissance and Impressionism. In Melbourne, Den, an indigenous Queenslander, explains to me that for Aboriginal people, everything starts and ends with the land. He takes me through the beautiful Botanical Gardens, a dream of landscaped order amid what was wilderness in

1846 when they were planted. He shows me medicine plants and those with precious water in their roots, and tells me about the Dreamings, the founding stories of the Ancestors, the great beings whose actions created that land.

Each people has totemic Ancestors whose Dreamings they recite, enact and paint. In doing so, they learn their land, the routes through it and their duties upon it. In Western art, a landscape usually explains its subject; in Aboriginal art, the land explains the paintings. The dashes and circles are wind and contour and that eternal necessity, water. A painting is map and icon and more.

When land rights first became a topic of legal discussion in Australia in the 1970s, many Aboriginal people turned to art to explain their form of ownership. These paintings went to court, as a form of deposition in native title claims, and some of them succeeded.

Not before time. Cook and his cohorts had looked at the raw rocks and shivering gum trees and envisioned a promising site for a prison as wide as the horizons in *terra nullius*, or empty land. How those first explorers reconciled the artefacts they brought back with the notion of an unpeopled land is hard to grasp. When we struggle to spot the landscape features or Ancestral Beings amid the circles and dots of Aboriginal painting, it is worth remembering that they are not the only ones to have looked at Australia's ancient topography and seen things that others would say aren't there.

In the Museum of Victoria's Bunjilaka Aboriginal Cultural Centre, I learn that selective seeing - or hearing - was a common failing. In 1835, John



Rugged: sunset on Victoria's coast and, right, an Aboriginal mask

Batman persuaded the indigenous Kulin people to sign over large tracts of Victoria - according to him, anyway; they viewed it differently. The Crown scotched the plan, saying the land was Crown property (another version the Kulin might challenge) and the Treaty, now in England, is still disputed.

Batman, a megalomaniac who helped found Melbourne (he tried to call it Batmania) and "a rogue, thief, cheat and liar, a murderer of blacks and the vilest man I have ever known"

according to his neighbour, is honoured with roads, gardens and statues all over Victoria. Near the imposing bulk of Parliament House, a statue of 19th-century poet Adam Lindsay Gordon bears strange praise: "He sang the first great songs these lands can claim to be their own." I think about the Aboriginal songs, thousands of years old, that Bruce Chatwin traced in his odd but compelling book *The Songlines*, and start to wonder if it is Aboriginal art that needs explaining, or the entire history of Australia.

Despite having astonishing rock etchings that predate

While you're there

Take an hour's drive south to the Mornington Peninsula for some of Australia's best wine country. Many vineyards have superb cellar-door restaurants with views of undulating vines.



France's Lascaux Caves paintings by more than 20,000 years, much of Australia's indigenous art was deliberately impermanent. Bodies were painted with ochre, drawings made in sand, and the traces removed once a ritual finished.

Most of what we call Aboriginal art is a modern solution to the desperate problem of communicating with an uncomprehending world. In 1971, when Geoffrey Bardon started teaching art to children in Papunya, a squalid Northern Territory settlement full of displaced Pintupi people, the adults seized their chance,

painting everything from canvas and brick to hubcaps and tiles in an attempt to explain their "country" to the race that had claimed it for their own. Many of those paintings are now famous, their likenesses plastered over every tacky tourist tchotchke in Australia.

Yet the symbols and stories of the Dreamings - the keys to these maps of the Aboriginal world view - are still known by far too few of us. Chatwin observes that Aboriginal song is hard to appreciate because of the endless accumulation of detail, although he believes that even a superficial reader can glimpse a moral universe "in which the structures of kinship reach out to all living men, to all his fellow creatures, and to the rivers, the rocks and the trees". Like most of his book, this is probably partly true but also romantic and simplistic. Still, no populist work has tried to understand the art as Chatwin did the songs.

Not all Aboriginal art is so complicated. At the Bunjilaka Centre's First Peoples exhibition, intricate metal baskets hang in an eerily blue room: reimagined coolamons, vessels made from bark that traditionally hold newborn babies. The Empty Coolamons are indigenous artist Robyne Latham's eloquent memorial for the Stolen Generations: children taken from their parents in a deliberate attempt to absorb them into white Australian society. Perhaps, I think, admiring, regretting, we should avoid interpretation altogether. After all, these

works are wordlessly beautiful - and as eloquent as a lament. "Aboriginal visual art," poet Les Murray has said, "is Australia's equivalent of jazz: a major new art style arising from the most oppressed group in our nation."

Still, though the Dreamtime may be as hard to explain as free jazz, context is vital if we are to understand. John Patten of the Bunjilaka centre puts it simply: "I don't like the name Dreamtime. I prefer just to call it history."

History without context is dangerous, or offensive. On Melbourne's Swanston Street, an extraordinary building has just been unveiled that has a grave face incorporated into its exterior. William Barak, a Wurundjeri Willum elder, successfully negotiated in 1863 for land to establish a farming community in northern Victoria. His settlement, Coranderrk, was self-sustaining until the inhabitants were thrown out two decades later; Barak led attempts at diplomacy, in vain.

His art, including Ceremony, a joyous portrait of his people celebrating the Dreamtime through the music and dance of a corroboree, is in the exhibition. It isn't hard to understand, either. However, you will learn nothing of

Barak's story from his face on a building of premium flats - an odd place to honour a lifelong activist for indigenous land rights. Sixty kilometres away, his grave lies forgotten near a monument to the dead, in a sparse,



Field Guide

The exhibitions: Indigenous Australia: Enduring Civilisation, British Museum, until 2 August (britishmuseum.org). The exhibition will travel to the National Museum of Australia, Canberra, in late 2015. The First Peoples exhibition is at Bunjilaka Aboriginal Cultural Centre, Melbourne.

Getting there: Singapore Airlines flies to Melbourne via Singapore from various European destinations daily (singaporeair.com).

Where to stay: Langham Melbourne near the National Gallery of Victoria and the Australian Centre for Contemporary Art (langhamhotels.com).

What to eat: At Attica, eat "bush tucker" from wattle seeds to macadamia nuts and quandongs, a tart, scarlet native fruit (attica.com.au).

Tours: Aboriginal Heritage Walks via the Royal Botanical Gardens (rbg.vic.com.au).

What to read: *The Songlines* by Bruce Chatwin; *Carpentaria* by Alexis Wright.

peaceful cemetery that is all that remains of Coranderrk.

The drive back is gorgeous, through pine-green, fern-pelted valleys; it jars to re-enter the modern city. The dissonance is eternal: perhaps this exhibition can help Australians to open their eyes and at last, 250 years on, find common ground.



By Nina Caplan

Award-winning freelance writer covering wine, food and culture

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CONGO, WHERE BRYAN FERRY IS A GOD

On the wild banks of the great river, civil wars have raged, the crocodiles still roam and one remote tribe has put the pop singer's picture on a bamboo altar



The first thing you notice slipping down the Congo River is the incredible light that seems

to shine out of the immense, silent forest. Occasionally, a green pigeon or hornbill will fly over the primeval flood, eight miles wide in places, but otherwise you are as alone as you will ever be on this planet.

The country here is still a lost world. Time is suspended, and the magical becomes normal. My shy captain had no clock or compass, just a smoked monkey (snack) for company. His crew regarded me as part of their African family and made sure I ate my monkey and did up my buttons. Chickens and strange fish were brought out to the boat in pirogues paddled by spiked-haired women who opened Primus beer bottles with perfect teeth.

I was on a 22-day journey to Kinshasa from Kisangani, home of Joseph Conrad's fictional Kurtz, where the market could switch from peaceful to being like a single wild animal. A soot-coloured mass grave for 200,000 is witness to how apocalyptic these riots have been. One man, thinking I was Belgian, wanted to chop off my arms and legs with his panga. I explained that I was "un anglais, en vacances" to polite astonishment and then smiles.

Travelling 1,760km downriver in a country where the recent civil wars have killed 5.4 million people, I encountered an almost surreal optimism. "Monsieur Paul, we are happy! Happy!" The future is all in a land where there is no one much over 40.

The river is as strange as it is pretty. Bryan Ferry is worshipped. La Sape, short for the Society of Ambienceurs and

Persons of Elegance, began as a male style reaction in the capital to drab Belgian colonialism, and there is nothing less Belgian than Ferry. The harder it is to find a Comme des Garçons shirt, the more power it brings to the wearer. One leading sapeur, who took the name of Colonel Jagger, calls Bryan Ferry "my favourite Englishman".

But Ferry's image travelled upriver and he was properly deified. At the sandy island village of Nganda Saisai I found his picture on a makeshift bamboo altar. The current members of the tribe, the Eleko, formerly cannibal, had not seen a white person in the flesh until I arrived.

At night they celebrated Bryan with rhythms from a 12ft drum and an incredible dance. They said Ferry was a "power" and worshipped even more on

another tributary of the Congo. "He is a god," said the chief. Ferry's sons want to go out there.

At a nearby village, a less happy chief filled our boat with a cloud of biting, suffocating termites until we gave him our beer. "Could have been worse, could have been crocodiles," said the captain. Another elder's wife, Janine, killed in the war, had come back as a large pet crocodile. "Look," he told me, "she has the most beautiful eyelashes!" This man lived in a place where an old missionary map I saw had warned there were VERY WILD PEOPLE.



By Paul Pickering

Author, inter alia, of *The Leopard's Wife*, a novel set in the Congo

@PaulPickering9

Field Guide

How to do it: Travel firms are Go Congo at gocongo.com or Wild Frontiers, wildfrontiers.co.uk; the latter does a trip from Kisangani to Kinshasa for £5,995.

How to get there: CAA flies to Kisangani from Kinshasa. Direct flights to Kinshasa go from Brussels or Paris.

What precautions to take: Yellow fever, hepatitis A and B jabs, malaria pills, 100% deet repellent and a mosquito net. **What to bring:** Pencils and notepads for children; footballs, old Roxy Music records and blue lipstick for grown-ups.

Look out for: Don't miss the obscene ndombolo dance – the word means buttocks.



Reincarnation: Paul with Janine, who was killed in the war and came back as a crocodile

WILLIAM WIDMER/REDUX/EYEVINE

BIG FUN ON THE BAYOU

Get your fill of jambalaya, crawfish pie, Cajun jamming or zydeco blues in a land where a distinctive local culture is loud and proud



If you fear the US is turning into one big strip mall then it's time to get off the main

highway and explore the byways of Cajun Country, where a distinctive local culture proudly rules. Comprising 22 of Louisiana's 64 parishes and running from west of New Orleans to the Texan border, it is rich in swamps and rice farms, bird life and alligators. Most notably, the small city of Lafayette and its environs are home to North America's most vibrant regional music scene.

Like everywhere in the South, Cajun Country is divided between white and black Americans. The Cajuns are descendants of French-speaking Acadians who fled the British conquest of Nova Scotia in the 18th century, Louisiana then being a French territory. And Cajun music is a wonderfully fluid folk music sung in French patois and traditionally played on accordion and fiddle. The Creoles, descendants of African slaves, favour zydeco, an accordion-led music with blues flavours and a powerful rhythm.

Hearing the music is easy - it's everywhere. The Blue Moon Saloon, in central Lafayette, hosts live music most nights. Arriving on a Wednesday I found the weekly Cajun Jam under way. Seated in a half circle, the all-acoustic Jam had musicians on violin, accordion, guitar, banjo and triangle. This spacious saloon (and guest house) attracts both visitors and locals, some joining in singing favourite songs. One gifted singer praised the players, saying they "are some of the best guys in the county".

The Blue Moon's crowd is hip and youthful, people who drink



Squeeze box: Cajun music is the descendant of French folk songs

craft beers and want to discuss indie bands alongside Louisiana legends. Situated in downtown Lafayette, it is the city's epicentre, of sorts.

On Saturday morning I drove to Beaux Bridge, a boutique town south-east of Lafayette, where Zydeco Breakfast is held at Café des Amis. Breakfast starts at 7.30am and by 9am people were queuing to enter. Inside, Leroy Thomas, a Stetson-wearing, accordion pumping Creole, was leading his swinging zydeco band.

The crowd tucked into beignets - fried dough covered in powdered sugar - and omelettes served with boudin - a white Cajun pork and rice sausage - while couples got up to dance the waltz and two-step between tables. And all the while Thomas sang songs celebrating "bon ton roulet" - letting the good times roll.

Saturday night found accordionist Steve Riley at La Poussière, at 60 the oldest of the Cajun dancehalls. Riley is a

Cajun icon, his blend of traditional and contemporary music having taken him across the globe. He's shared a stage with Robert Plant yet at home he's just the leader of a dance band. La Poussière, on the outskirts of Lafayette, is more traditional than the Blue Moon or Café des Amis, a no-frills, rectangular building designed solely for dancing. The Cajun couples who come here on Saturday night are drawn from

the surrounding farming communities; both the youthful and the middle-aged dress in a smart, conservative manner, with cowboy boots and hats for the men. That said, everyone's very friendly and people made me welcome - even though I can't dance.

Indeed, Riley is so good that I went to hear him again on Sunday afternoon at Whiskey River, a ramshackle dancehall built on the bayou (Cajun for swamp) next to McGee's Landing on Lake Henderson. You reach Whiskey River by driving on a dirt road over a levy and there it sits, the dancefloor's main window looking straight on to the swamp. Whiskey River is full of Cajuns dancing, bikers drinking, raucous bartenders and a cloud of smoke - there's no smoking ban in Cajun country. As the sun sets and Steve Riley squeezes his accordion I think how when America is wild and free it's the most fun place going.



By Garth Cartwright

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Field Guide

How to get there: From Louis Armstrong International Airport in New Orleans it is a very scenic two-hour drive (a car is necessary to explore this largely rural community).

What to read/watch: Les Blank's wonderful DVD *J'ai Été Au Bal* (I Went To The Dance) is a celebration of Cajun music and culture. John Broven's

South To Louisiana chronicles the region's musical history.

What to eat: Cajun and creole cooking is some of the best in the US. Gumbo, jambalaya, crawfish and boudin are local specialties.

What to pack: From mid-April to mid-September Cajun country is steamy. Winter can get cold but rarely bitter.

'SOMETHING IS SERIOUSLY WRONG'

An intense drama about mass hysteria in a girls' grammar school depicts a postwar England that's stuffy, stifling and pullulating with repressed desire



Rudolph Herzog
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It's Monday morning in an English girls' school in the late 1960s. A spinsterly type is about to address assembly on the subject of "accidents in the home" but before she has uttered a word, one of the pupils gets up, raises both arms and passes out. As she collapses on the cold floor, other girls, too, rise, convulse, and faint; within a few minutes the room is full of lifeless teenagers.

The epidemic in *The Falling* makes lessons impossible and the helpless teachers float theories from "they're making it all up" to the more outlandish diagnosis of "disordered womb". The malady is clearly centred on a supposedly female illness - hysteria, the late 19th century's most fashionable complaint. Fin-de-siècle sufferers developed alarming symptoms from uncontrolled laughter and high blood pressure to sudden dizzy spells. Doctors prescribed smelling salts, fresh air and high voltage electrotherapy. Puzzled by the illness, Sigmund Freud attributed it to "insufficient libidinal discharge".

Echoing the great Viennese psychotherapist, and thus juxtaposing 19th-century Vienna with 1960s Britain, the



On the cusp: Florence Pugh and Maisie Williams as Abbie and Lydia

epidemic in *The Falling*, too, is linked to sex. It begins with the death of Abbie (Florence Pugh), the first girl in the class to sleep with a boy. When she realises she is pregnant, she confides in her best friend Lydia (Maisie Williams) that she is planning a secret abortion. Soon after, Abbie collapses in front of matronly schoolmistress Miss Mantel (Greta Scacchi); attempts to revive her fail.

In consequence, Lydia starts to develop the symptoms that will bring out a rebellious streak in her character, spread to others and create havoc in the school. She becomes aggressive, taking out her frustration about life and the universe on her mother: "Seeing you, I'm looking at the result of not being educated," she hisses.

Lydia's mother belongs to a generation of women who were conditioned to be submissive, a mere adjunct to men's lives. Being divorced knocked her self-esteem and drove her into isolation, a fate Lydia is

fashioned and paralysed by stuffy rituals.

But while it may be true that the generation of 1968 had plenty to rebel against, it is hard to imagine the Britain of the time was quite so bad. The system wasn't really a bleak dystopia, nor were the schools as Dickensian as that in *The Falling*, and they did provide the opportunities other generations of women had been denied.

This grim image of Britain's schools in the postwar decades may be inspired by boarding schools, bywords for rigour, cold baths and guilty homosexuality. Yet few children ever saw one of these expensive schools from the inside. And the pupils' suffering may have been exaggerated in hindsight. All of that had little to do with a small-town girls' grammar as shown in *The Falling*. The film feels clichéd, not quite delivering on its unusual premise. Irritating music and mannered sequences of tree-hugging don't improve matters.

Nevertheless, *The Falling* has intense, disturbing moments, such as when Lydia, shaking from head to toe, seduces her own brother, as if to prove her own theory that "something here is seriously wrong".

Sickness and celluloid

Epidemics of weird and dangerous diseases can make good movies – from Terry Gilliam's *12 Monkeys* to Petersen's *Outbreak*. Unlike the deadly infections of those movies, the link in *The Falling* between illness and repressed sexuality would have delighted Freud's contemporary Arthur Schnitzler. The Viennese

playwright and novelist wrote the story on which Stanley Kubrick's fantastical *Eyes Wide Shut* is based, and was keenly aware of the disastrous effects a strict moral code can have on the psyche. Plays like *Reigen* (*La Ronde*) pushed back against Victorian morality and its characters live out their sexuality unashamedly.

When and where

The Falling opens in London on 24 April. Likely to be across Europe at the end of the year

THE SHOCK OF THE ANCIENT

Modern squabbles about the Elgin Marbles have nothing on the storms and scandals around the original creators of Greek art

As modern Greeks, Brits and Hollywood hotshots continue to debate where the Elgin Marbles belong today, and as an exhibition of ancient Greek art runs at the British Museum, the original controversies that surrounded ancient sculptures have been as good as forgotten. The very things that obsessed the ancients - the stormy legal cases, jealous wrangling and courtesans of the artists who brought the stones to life in the first place - have been displaced by the dull "ours" or "theirs" of the dispute over their legacy.

The artists of antiquity would have been baffled by those who claim their marbles today based on national identity. Greece was no nation, and, despite their pride in being Greek, inhabitants of its various city-states were more likely to absorb the ideas of other peoples than distinguish between what was theirs and what was not.

And the sculptors had pressing preoccupations of their own. Modern artists are used to having their private lives dissected as part of the story of their work, and so were they. These were the earthy episodes that gave much of their work its colour.

Phidias, responsible for the hard thighs and touch-me torsos of the Elgin Marbles, had more than one male lover in his lifetime. In the rippling body of his *Ilisos*, the sculpture of a river god in the British Museum, one might see the handsome boys he took to bed, such as *Pantarcus* of Elis, a champion

wrestler. Phidias's combining of private and professional lives ultimately proved his undoing. After Pericles employed him to design the Parthenon artworks, comic poets are said to have stirred up malicious rumours that Phidias was pimping well-born women to be Pericles' lovers. The ladies were said to arrive at the Acropolis on the pretence of admiring his exquisite sculptures. How impressive that sight must have been is conveyed by the exhibition of the torso of the messenger goddess *Iris* together with a gilded reconstruction of Phidias's lost *Athena Lemnia*.

Placed inside the Parthenon, another Phidian sculpture of the goddess, colossal and cast in gold and ivory, caught the eye of Pericles' enemies, who persuaded one of the artist's assistants to accuse Phidias of embezzling its gold. His accusers weighed it only to find none missing but Phidias was imprisoned and exiled all the same, having riled people further, according to Plutarch, by impiously incorporating portraits of himself and Pericles into *Athena's* shield.

That did not stop him or other Greeks casting the gods in their own image. They saw the gods as bigger, more beautiful, more dazzling than themselves, but there was little to tell sculptures of divinities from those of mortals. On display is a Roman copy of a Greek bronze discus-thrower by Phidias's contemporary Myron. Poised, graceful, godlike in illusory



Godlike: Myron's discus-thrower. Below left, Phidias's *Ilisos*

perfection; the athlete was made to make the soul quiver. A nude *Venus* - inspired by a 4th-century BC sculpture by Praxiteles - so irresistible a man is said to have left his semen on it, only half-heartedly tries to cover her chest and crotch.

In the goddess's feigned demureness the original model may have left her trace: ancient writers alleged that Praxiteles's famous *Aphrodite* was based on a prostitute, his lover *Phryne*. She won notoriety for her wealth and impropriety. When accused of inappropriate revelry and inventing a new god, she was excused only after her lawyer bared her breasts before the jury - just like *Aphrodite* in the sculpture.

If the British Museum's breathtaking, enlightening new exhibition throws more light on the exquisite

mortals and immortals in art than on the artists themselves, it does not overlook how men capitalised on the artistic relationship between mortal and divine. Particularly fine is a bust of Alexander the Great, who believed he could disguise his short stature by tilting his head to one side. Lysippos, the Greek artist whose original bust inspired the Roman version on display here, was the only man Alexander allowed to sculpt his portrait. While other sculptors "made men as they really were, he made them as they appeared to be": tall, slim, and with wonderful hair.



By Daisy Dunn

Writer, historian and holder of a doctorate in Classics and Art History

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When and where
Defining Beauty: the body in ancient Greek art is at the British Museum until 5 July



YOUR TINY FLYING PET

Join the drone craze with the latest aerial camera; small, affordable – and able to follow you around

Graham Boynton

🐦@BoyntonTravels

So suddenly ubiquitous have drones become that there is now even a word for the pictures taken by these flying cameras – dronies have become the new selfies. In London, you can already see a new breed of drone owners out at the weekends on Hampstead Heath, in Richmond and Greenwich, honing their radio-control skills. And given how affordable drones now are, you can expect to see a lot more of them this summer.

What makes the Zano Drone, which comes onto the market in June, particularly interesting is, first, its minuscule size and, second, that it can follow you around. At 2.5in by 2.5in (6.5 x 6.6cm), it fits comfortably in the palm of your hand. It weighs just under 2oz and the battery can be charged through either a micro USB on board the drone or externally through a special adaptor. This gives it a flying time of between 10 and 15



Palmtop: the photographic Zano drone

minutes and a range of between 50 and 100 feet. The camera provides wide-angle 1080p high definition video or 5 megapixel still photographs and, according to the developers Torquing, future software updates will

offer Zano owners even higher resolution videos.

You fly the Zano with another hand-held device, your phone, and this is what allows it to follow you around like a faithful flying dog on an invisible lead.

Onboard Wi-Fi connects it to your phone or tablet and the piloting is done through a companion app. You steer with a pair of on-screen sliders or by using virtual joysticks for more precise control. But no training is required – it's all intuitive and easy to operate. The Zano also dodges obstacles and can return to you automatically.

Since we're yet to see the Man Ray or Cartier-Bresson of drone photography, the Zano falls firmly into the boy's toys category. But for around €240, you are entering this world for little expense and less trouble. But be warned, once hooked you may then want to start looking at the something more versatile, technologically advanced and considerably more expensive. The next step up is the Vision Augmented Piloting system quadcopter that responds to hand movements – for around €750 – and after that it's high-tech hoverers that shoot 4K video and 12 megapixel photographs for €3,500. But that's another story.

LED Lenser P7

There are torches and then there are LED Lensers; the latter are high-powered and make use of cutting edge LED technology to produce a clear, strong beam. German manufacturer LED Lenser makes a wide range but the P7 has become the most popular probably because it is the most versatile. It has a black aluminium case with a knurled grip, is 13cm long, weighs 175g and is thus strong, comfortable, balanced and light, while boasting 200 lumens of focusable light. The company claims this gives a 260m beam

range, which is remarkable, and it is the brightest flashlight of this size I've ever used. A major caveat: there are a significant number of Chinese-sourced LED Lenser fakes on the market, so be suspicious of any such torches being offered at bargain prices. Genuine LED Lensers are not cheap – Maplin, for example, sells the P7s for £49 (€68).



Cambridge TV2 Speaker Base

Soundbases and soundbars have been hailed as turning watching TV into a home cinema experience. These boxes, which sit under or in front of the TV, provide a reasonable, affordable improvement on the poor audio quality offered by wafer-thin modern TV sets. I prefer the simpler soundbases to soundbars as they offer a good rounded sound without the need for a sub-woofer. This one is just an oblong black box (550 mm wide and 100 mm

high), but it's neat enough and TV sets with up to 40in screens perch comfortably on top of it. The two mid-range speakers are on the front panel behind a removable cloth grille. There are "film", "music", "TV" and "Voice EQ" settings to play with. Overall the sound quality is balanced, clear and resonant, particularly effective for films. £200 (€278) from Richer Sounds.





Uncontaminated world: Gauguin's masterpiece *D'ou Venons nous? Que Sommes Nous? Ou Allons Nous?*

THE VALUE OF AN OUTRAGEOUS LIFE

Gauguin's wild reputation accelerated his career but this exhibition, six years in the making, shows how he finally transcended his obsessions



Nick Foulkes

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Wherever you are in the world you are unlikely to be that far from an art fair, biennale or local branch of your favourite super gallery. There are, however, certain lodestars, the most effulgent of which is ArtBasel. For a week or so in June the Rhine-side city becomes art's epicentre.

The best art in Basel, however, is not necessarily seen during the frenzied few days of the fair but at other times of the year, as when I went in late March to the Fondation Beyeler to see the Gauguin show.

It is a brilliant, subtly curated

exhibition, beginning with a self-portrait of the artist in weird Symbolist fancy dress and ending with another self-portrait executed in the year of his death, an old, syphilis-weathered face peering through small John Lennon spectacles, the showmanship and flamboyance of his younger years stripped away.

Gauguin's life is so huge that it does not obscure his art, but becomes it. As a child, Gauguin lived for some years in Peru. As a teenager he enrolled in the merchant navy. Later he seems to have enjoyed some success as a financier, enough at least to start collecting Impressionist paintings before deciding to become an artist himself. His life thereafter became picaresque: he travelled the world from the polar regions to Polynesia, worked with Van Gogh and made friends with (and on occasion fell out with) pretty much all the cultural leaders of the day, from Strindberg to Pissarro.

He seems to have spent his life looking for something that he never found. There is an

almost Jungian aspect to his quest for a mystical universal human experience, which he thought he would discover among the primitive peoples of the South Pacific. Upon arrival, however, he found European colonialism had got there before him. The "purity" of a world uncontaminated by European notions of progress would remain tantalisingly just beyond his reach; yet in the works on show here it is almost possible to see him trying to paint this elusive idyll into existence.

Part of Gauguin's stock-in-trade was his racketiness, which fed into the image of the rebellious, dissolute loner, something of a proto-hippy. There are frankly unappealing aspects of his character - viewed by today's standards, he would probably be prosecuted as a sex tourist preying on minors. He gorged himself on the exoticism of these ever more extreme environments, soaking his art in the colours and strangeness of his surroundings - and his capacity to shock was part of his commercial value.

The show dwells at length on

the Polynesian paintings, of which the most remarkable is *D'ou Venons nous? Que Sommes Nous? Ou Allons Nous?* It does not answer any of those questions but it is a remarkable thing to look at, a giant work that transcends its depiction of the exotic. After its completion and believing it to be his best work, Gauguin attempted to take his own life by ingesting arsenic; he survived but his health never recovered.

It must have taken some persuading to get Boston's Museum of Fine Arts to send it. Not just Boston, there are loans from the Musée d'Orsay, the Pushkin, the Hermitage, Moma, the Thyssen and many others. No wonder the show took six years to put together. It is called the foundation's most involved project, but then the Museum's director, Sam Keller, has form in dazzling coups. Before running the Beyeler, he was ringmaster of the ArtBasel circus and, as the man who expanded the fair to Miami, is one of the leading art impresarios of our age; a reputation that this show will only burnish.

When and where

The Gauguin show is at Basel's Fondation Beyeler, until 28 June. Info: fondationbeyeler.ch

WHAT ARE TODAY'S TEENS THINKING?

Thrillingly candid interviews with 'Generation Z' display all their fixations, their humour, and the frightening power of the technology in their pockets

Generation Z

by Chloe Combi
Hutchinson (£18.99)



In the preface to this book, Chloe Combi quotes one of its interview subjects, Kurt, 16, as saying: "I can't wait to read it because

it's going to be sick, and I'm in it, and then I can give it to my mum and she can stop f***** asking me what I'm thinking all the time." As soon as I'd read it, I gave a copy to my mum and said: "See? All those stories I told you about the kids I taught at school? I really wasn't making them up!" Anyone who has worked with teenagers will recognise plenty of the voices in this collection of interviews with "Generation Z", defined here as those born between 1995 and 2001.

That's not to say the stories are all similar: far from it. There's the wealthy Cressida from Cambridge, who tells us that in her circles, ageing isn't "acceptable or necessary", and there's the much poorer Lottie from Exeter, who says that her family rent a TV, but she sometimes wishes they didn't, "because it just shows kids what they are missing".

There's a group of girls from Scarborough who use Twitter to track One Direction, and there's Jared from Southampton, who spends four hours a day watching internet porn. There's gay and Jewish Simon, about to launch an exciting business venture, and there's Fariad, who moved to Coventry from Afghanistan six years ago and thinks terrorism is awful: "I wouldn't even graffiti here, let alone blow it up." Jayden is from



Punchy: One Direction fans

south London, but has never seen the South Bank centre; Lekhika is from India, and now studies at UCL. Paul from Wolverhampton deals cocaine because there's "nowhere else to make money"; Katherine tells of parties with the super-rich in Chelsea that "are absolutely full of cocaine and they hire actual hookers".

Apart from a brief preface and some factual notes at the start of each interview, the book is told entirely by these teen voices, with little authorial intervention. It's up to the

reader to decide what they make of this generation, and whether it even makes sense to define these voices as such.

One of the difficulties with classifying people by age is that other aspects of their identity exert a stronger pull: Justin from an elite school in middle-class Surrey probably has more in common with an old boy who left 40 years ago than with Melody, only one year older but leader of a gang in east London.

Does anything definitively unite these teens and separate them from older generations?

The obvious candidate is technology. These kids don't buy CDs or go to the cinema. Their phones are their lives. So much so that John from Great Yarmouth cannot understand the irresponsibility of those who lose them: "You wouldn't lose your kid, would you?"

He uses his phone to troll celebrities: "I often call [TV personality] Lauren Goodger a dirty, fat whale and that, because I know she'll see it, and it'll upset her."

The book recounts many even more disturbing uses of

AT THE BOTTOM OF FOOTBALL'S LEAGUE

Insecurity, car-pooling and tax evasion in a revealing memoir many miles from the glitz and riches of the top flight

Further reading on ... generations

Grown Up Digital by Don Tapscott. Based on another detailed survey of teens, the author argues that smartphones, video games and always-on internet are actually making teens smarter.

Alone Together by Shelly Turkle. A less optimistic look at the impact of technology on young people.

To Miss with Love by Katherine Birbalsingh. Stories from an inner-city comprehensive in London, from the point of view of a teacher and bringing to life the joys and frustrations of working with teens.

Generation X by Douglas Coupland. Framed as three friends living in California telling each other their stories, this novel was the one to start the trend of labelling generations with letters.

The Outsiders by Susan Hinton. She was just 15 when she wrote this novel about rival teen gangs in 1960s America.

The Secret Diary of Adrian Mole aged 13 ¾ by Sue Townsend. Teenage angst at its best and funniest. The problems with spots, girls, bullies and parents that Adrian records are timeless.

technology, but it's as well to remember the liberating uses: my favourite interview was with Rita from Bristol. She's disabled and can't attend school but she gets lessons Skyped to home and has set up a successful eBay business trading vintage Barbie dolls. In some ways, technology is enabling teenagers to do things they have always done: in the Sixties, girls screamed over the Beatles and boys bought Playboy, so maybe girls who use Twitter to stalk One Direction and boys who watch four hours of porn films a day differ little from their grandparents.

I'm not sure I buy this, though: by making it easier to do what we would be doing anyway, technology actually changes the nature of those activities. If you make enough quantitative changes, you get a qualitative one. Or, as Lenin is alleged to have said, quantity has a quality all of its own.

As I read these teens' stories, I was struck by the power technology has given them, and

the very different ways they choose to use it. The mind is its own place, and in itself can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven. If that was true for Milton in the 17th century, how much truer is it now, when technology allows us to focus solely on what we are interested in and to exclude anything we dislike or find boring?

These teens have grown up with that immense power in their pockets. They've used it for business and for all-night video-gaming, for socialising with people they do like and bullying those they don't.

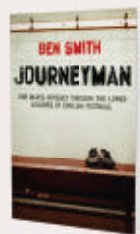
Will they make a heaven or a hell for themselves? We'll have to wait for the sequels to this book to find out for sure. Until then, read this one.



By Daisy Christodoulou
Research manager at charity Ark Schools
@daisychristo

Journeyman

by Ben Smith
Biteback (£12.99)



Ben Smith never made the big time. The midfielder spent much of his 17-year career in the fourth and fifth tiers of

English football, and his memoir charts a world distant from Premier League glitz.

The galling insecurity of lower-league life runs through *Journeyman*. Smith played as a teenage trainee at Arsenal but washed out. At second-tier Reading he made the first team once. Later he descended to small-town clubs such as Hereford United, Shrewsbury and Weymouth, often spending the close season seeking a new contract, and admitting: "I moved house nine times and never really settled."

Smith's depiction of this hardscrabble environment is vivid. We see a world in which 5,000 is a large crowd and where the players car-pool to save the cost of petrol.

At Crawley Town, a Scottish manager called Steve Evans, who had previously been sentenced for tax evasion, runs an extraordinary, swearsy regime. After poor Saturday

performances, the players are punished with Sunday morning training sessions and the humiliation of having

their club kit confiscated. The attrition in football's hopefuls is brutal. Underpinning Smith's narrative is a statistic he does not include: of young players offered an academy place at 16 only 15% are still in the game five years later. Nonetheless, the pay, when it came, could be good, and at one point he was earning £1,400 (1,950 per week).

Average lower-league wages have increased by more than 70% in the past 20 years, despite the opening of a huge gulf between them and the massive wealth of the top flight. So although today's lower-league players are richer than ever in absolute terms, relatively, they have never been poorer.

The time that really starts to bite is when the players stop playing. When the Premier League elite retire, they are now independently wealthy for life. Lower-league men like Smith have to work when they hang up their boots.

In the year after leaving football, Smith goes to work in a school. He is out of his depth, teaching maths and philosophy as well as football, his mood falls: "I have been back at school a week since the Easter holidays and currently feel really low, bordering on depressed."

The transition is as tough on the mind as the wallet. Even as a lower-league player, the fans know your name. Girls in provincial nightclubs are impressed. Normality is a difficult second half.



By Simon Akam
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STEALTH WEALTH: A SPOTTER'S GUIDE

Gone are the days of ostentatious bling handbags bejewelled and bejangled with locket and chains. Now only those in the know can see the expense



Alice Hart-Davis
 @AliceHartDavis

Flicking through the latest crop of glossy magazines, something looks different. In the luxury ads in the opening pages, there is, as always, a fine selection of handbags. Usually, these bags are in your face, jumping out of the page with their loud colours and ostentatious designs. But just now, they seem to be a whole lot quieter.

The big brands' flagship bags are positively muted. There's Dior's ladylike "Be Dior" bag, Chanel's "11.12" shoulder bag, Celine's large tote, all in plain black. And then there's Mansur Gavriel, which doesn't advertise and which you won't have heard of unless you're an avid follower of fashion. But the three-year-old New York firm's first concise range of plain but luxurious bags sold out in weeks and they have been almost impossible to get hold of ever since.

Most popular is Mansur Gavriel's bucket bag. It's a plain shape with an adjustable handle, its one identifying quirk the contrasting matte patent lining. You can't buy them until

the next consignment arrives in May; the last sold out in a matter of hours.

What can have brought on this zealous new modesty? Handbags say a good deal about the women who tote them, and it looks as if this year's message is: the less said, the better. Stealth wealth means luxury but with discretion. It's a way of carrying on spending enormous amounts of money on fashion and accessories without advertising the fact - the stylish choice after years of economic downturn. It's the bespoke suit, it's the handmade shirt and shoes, and it's pure class.

"After the recession, it was not cool to be seen walking down the street with a bag shouting 'Luxury!'," says Fflur Roberts, head of luxury goods at Euromonitor International. When the luxury market began to democratise over a decade ago, the tendency was for new wealth to show off. Hence the waves of "It bags" - gaudy, showy expensive delights clunking with distinctive chains, buckles and logos - but ostentation has since become passé. Now the expense is sublimated as "quality".

"Apart from the few brands that are still trying to catch the attention of the last rich Russian clients with opulent golden details and rhinestones, the concept of luxury bag has



'Intrecciato': the closely woven leather signals a Bottega Veneta

changed a lot," says Alessandro Masetti, an architect and fashion commentator based in Florence. "If you look at the latest bags you can see that the

bigger the bags, the less decoration they have; these are not minaudières for the red carpets. They must be versatile, functional and practical."

Ah yes, practicality. You might think that anyone spending up to £5,000 on a handbag was beyond such considerations. Or, you might wonder, if the bag is designed not to attract attention, why not instead choose one of the hundreds of high-street imitations at a fraction of the price? But that is missing the point of stealth wealth, which is that others in the know will see it, and recognise it.

"For the luxury buyer, if you can't see the label, that's even better," says Roberts. "Those in the know will know what the bag is, and everyone else doesn't matter."

So how do you spot them? It is, of course, intentionally difficult for the uninitiated. Stealth-wealth bags appear positively plain yet have that luxe knack of just looking expensive. They have a sculptural simplicity and a nice balance to their proportions. Most are capacious totes or bucket bags.

Look for brand quirks; the closely-woven "intrecciato" leather strips that signal a Bottega Veneta; the elongated triangles of soft leather that, stitched together into a roomy, collapsible tote, make up Loewe's new Puzzle bag. And sometimes they can't quite resist a little decoration. Dior's Be Dior comes with a metal charm of dangling letters that spell the brand name, and the clean lines of McQueen's dove-grey Padlock Tote are broken by a little skull-shaped padlock. You could always remove these - that would be the stealthiest of all.

In China there is no such word as 'luxury' - by law

Stealth wealth has hit China, too, though for very different reasons: a government clampdown on luxury gifting. Over the past few years, President Xi has tightened regulations on giving gifts as

part of his anti-extravagance and anti-corruption drive. He has outlawed ads for luxury products, as well as banning using words such as "luxury" and "supreme" in advertising or anything that encourages a

"foreign" lifestyle, claiming they promote the wrong values and encourage bribery. The effect has been a drop in profits for luxury brands - and a greater appreciation of accessories that are luxurious but discreet.

FOLLOWING REMBRANDT HOME

The Late Rembrandt exhibition has travelled from London to the master's native Amsterdam – and I saw him anew by going with it



Harry Eyres

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I pursued the magnificent Late Rembrandt exhibition from London's National Gallery to the Rijksmuseum in Amsterdam more in the spirit of an enraptured football fan than an artistic connoisseur. Some teams, or shows, are so great that you must follow them wherever they go, home and away.

The home leg here was, of course, Amsterdam. This was where Rembrandt lived, had relationships, worked and died. And my sense of this universal but also protean, multifaceted and theatrical artist was transformed in his home town. More or less the same exhibition – the Rijksmuseum version has four fascinating paintings not seen in London – looked quite different under Dutch skies from what I remembered in London.

The National Gallery had chosen to exhibit the late paintings, drawings and etchings in the sepulchral, airless space of the Sainsbury Wing's basement. Certain works glowed out of the darkness with great dramatic intensity, with *The Jewish Bride* – that unmatched study of conjugal tenderness, which Van Gogh said he would happily give up 10 years of life



Domestic warmth: Rembrandt's *The Family Portrait*

to spend a fortnight looking at – taking up one whole wall of what seemed a shrine within a shrine. The tragic pathos of the two Lucretia paintings, catching the Roman heroine in the act of taking her life in response to violation, seemed amplified in the crypt-like gloom. But the exquisite drawings and masterful etchings, including some of the greatest works in the show, such as the various states of the *Three Crosses* and the *Nativity*, were barely visible at all.

In the spacious, naturally lit galleries of the Rijksmuseum, by contrast, the darkness that saturates so many of Rembrandt's late works is lightened. Mystical religiosity is leavened by a greater emphasis on the everyday, the public, even the humorous. Here the *Jewish Bride* shares a wall with the warm, domestic *Family Portrait from Braunschweig* – a consonant pairing which the Rijksmuseum's head of collections Taco Dibbits said

“
The darkness that saturates so many of Rembrandt's late works is lightened

had inspired him to put on the show in the first place. One of the paintings not seen in London is the startlingly earthy self-portrait as Zeuxis, the ancient Greek artist said to have laughed himself to death when commissioned to paint an old hag in the guise of Aphrodite.

Here is a more satirical side of Rembrandt from the infinitely compassionate artist who could empathise with Lucretia or the compromised Bathsheba. Other unexpected facets also appear in another show running concurrently in Amsterdam. This is Rembrandt's Late Pupils at the Rembrandthuis.

Alongside his calling and practice as an artist,

Rembrandt for most of his working life ran a parallel career as a teacher. His pupils are numbered in scores and include some of the most distinguished figures in 17th-century Dutch art (Maes, Van Hoogstraten, Ferdinand Bol). Rembrandt was in demand not because he was seen as a visionary humanist but because of his mastery of so many painterly and graphic skills. And if you think of Rembrandt as a gentle, sympathetic soul, who could so beautifully convey the dreamy inwardness of the expression of his son Titus, then he was not always gentle as a teacher. “Sometimes I was so saddened by my master's hard instructions,” wrote his pupil Samuel van Hoogstraten, “that I would not eat or drink, and slake my thirst with my tears.”

Gottfried, later Sir Godfrey, Kneller complained about the lack of “exact design and true proportion” in Rembrandt's loose method. On the whole, though, Rembrandt's late pupils learned profitably from their tough master. There is work of great variety; I was especially struck by the delicate landscape sketches of Peter de With and the powerfully emotional biblical scenes of Abraham van Dijck. One of Rembrandt's most talented and devoted pupils was Willem Drost, who died in Venice aged only 25. Drost stayed so close to Rembrandt's style that art historians still struggle to distinguish their works.

Here, again, was a different Rembrandt from the one I thought I knew: not so much the mysterious shaman as a figure fully of his time and place, juggling careers. Even the most universal artists spring out of local clay.

When and where

Until 17 May Late Rembrandt is at the Rijksmuseum and Late Pupils is at the Rembrandthuis

ALEX BEARD

The CEO of London's Royal Opera House enjoys poker and Virginia Woolf, but admits he's a shockingly bad musician

Friday night

I have a regular poker night with eight old friends. Last time, it was 30 years almost to the day that we started our poker school and we celebrated with a few bottles of decent wine. We play for fun, to catch up on life, but these days I only rarely manage to join in as on Friday nights I'm most often in the Royal Opera House for a show.

Saturday morning

I get up around eight, have coffee, read the newspaper and make my special breakfast concoction: granola, oats, yoghurt, nuts, pomegranate arils and seeds. I make it almost every morning. Saturday breakfast is when I have a proper catch-up with Kate. We've been married for 23 years now and have a daughter at university and a son who's studying for his A-levels. After breakfast I go for a bicycle ride, about 50 miles, a circuit through all the major parks of London, plus some bits on the roads between them. I love that ride. It's a great way of clearing my head and keeping fit.

Saturday afternoon

I love cooking, so on weekends I tend to cook for the family. When I cook I love listening to music. There's a programme on BBC Radio 3, *Building a Library*,



Opera-lover: "The iPlayer is one of the greatest inventions of all time"

which I always listen to, usually on the iPlayer. The iPlayer is one of the greatest inventions of all time. I grew up with music. My mother was a flute teacher and my father an enthusiastic choir member. They instilled in me a love of classical music and opera, joined by a more new-found love of ballet. As for my own musical skills, I'm a shockingly bad musician. I played the cello very badly but sang pretty well until my voice broke.

In the afternoon I shop for

groceries, getting things for Sunday lunch. After that, it can be time to prepare to go the Opera House. After premieres and first performances of revivals, Kate and I usually catch up with the cast afterwards.

Sunday daytime

On Sunday I get up around eight, make my usual Sunday fry-up with bacon, eggs etcetera for the family, and after a good chat about all the news go for a one-and-a-half-

Curriculum Vitae

Alex has spent most of his life in the arts, starting out at the Arts Council of Great Britain. He then went to the Tate, staying for 19 years and working on the creation of Tate Modern. He joined the ROH in 2013 and has also been on the board of Glyndebourne opera.

hour combined jog and walk. We live in Hammersmith, and our house is only five to 10 minutes' walk from the river Thames, so Kate and I potter along there quite often. After that I make Sunday lunch, joined by a couple of friends and their kids.

Sunday evening

I recently went to the Olivier Awards ceremony. I had several guests in the director's box and stayed for the post-show party. I got home at 11pm and then faced the big decision of which book to read. I settled on *To The Lighthouse* by Virginia Woolf. Our resident choreographer, Wayne McGregor, is putting together a work based on Woolf's writings, opening in mid-May, so I thought it was high time to get reacquainted. *Mrs Dalloway* next...

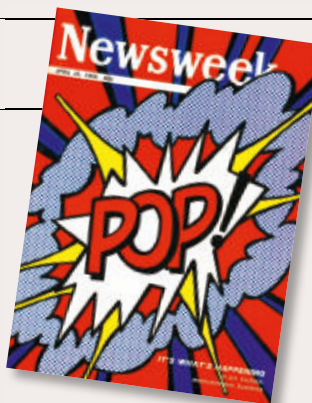
As told to Elisabeth Braw

NEWS WEEKS PAST 25 APRIL 1966

What is "pop"?

It's a fad, it's a trend, it's a way of life. It's a \$5,000 Roy Lichtenstein painting of an underwater kiss hanging in a businessman's living room. It's a \$1 poster of Mandrake the Magician yelling, "Hang on Lothar! I'm coming!" taped to a college-dorm wall. It's

30 million viewers dialling *Batman* on ABC every week. It's Superman zooming around on the Broadway stage attached to a wire, while the sophisticates in their \$12 seats are carried back to childhood. It's a Pow! Bam! commercial for Life Savers on TV and a huge commercial billboard



for No-Cal glaring down on Times Square. It's the no-bra bra and the no-back dress. It's Andy Warhol's new nightclub, The Plastic Inevitable, where three movies flicker simultaneously and a man lifts barbells to a rock beat. In short, pop is what's happening.

HELP SAVE THE 'WOW'

These giants of the animal kingdom need help. Despite their strength and cunning they're no match for a poacher's rifle. For 50 years WWF has been securing protected areas worldwide, but these aren't enough to stop the killing. To disrupt the sophisticated criminal gangs supplying animal parts to lucrative illegal markets, we are working with governments to toughen law enforcement. We're also working with consumers to reduce the demand for unlawful wildlife products. Help us look after the world where you live at panda.org/50



Silverback Western lowland gorilla.



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we are giving you to the chance to own a
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